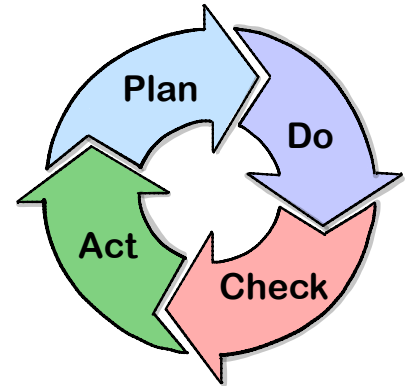


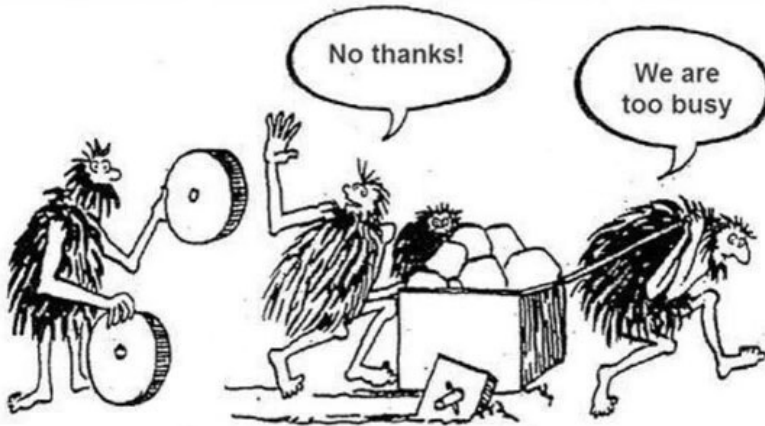
Visual Guide to  
Retrospective:  
Why, What, How



# Retrospective

## PURPOSE

To plan ways to increase quality and effectiveness



## NO BLAMING

*"Regardless of what we discover, we understand and truly believe that everyone did the best job they could, given what was known at the time, their skills and abilities, the resources available, and the situation at hand."*

*Norm Kerth, The Retro Prime Directive*

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

FACILITATED EVENT

EVERYONE IS PARTICIPATING

1-2 HOURS

## Typical problems with retro

Not keeping retros

"Too busy" attitude

No tangible action items

Recommendations,  
wishful thinking instead

No clear owners  
of Action Items

The first step is  
not clear

"Somebody else" action item

Not everybody fully engaged to the process

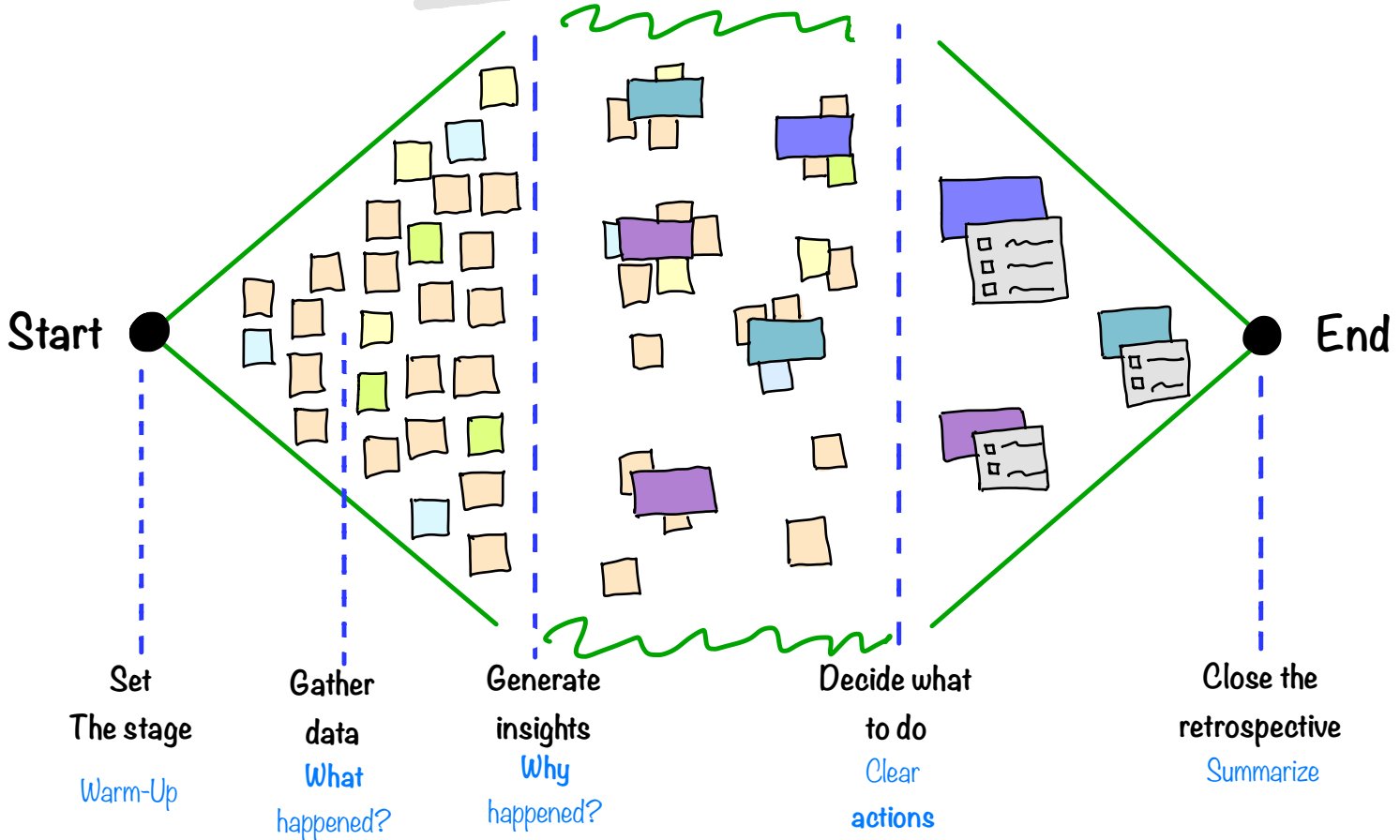
No commitment to what agreed

No follow-up

Inattention to result

No improvements as a result

# 5 Phases of Retrospective

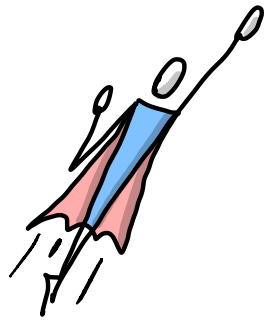


Set the stage

PURPOSE

Warm-Up

- Help people focus on the work ahead
- Set the goal and direction for the retro
- Create an atmosphere where people feel comfortable discussing issues.



Get people in a good mood, to laugh, get a bit closer to each other

Ice-breaker

Mini team building exercise

Direct connection to the retro topic

Creativity boosting



## PURPOSE

- Create a shared pool of data
- Look at the past to gain insights
- Consider hard data and personal experiences

Facts, not assumptions

What happened?



Hard data:  
metrics, events,  
features, defects

Also personal  
experiences &  
feelings

Avoid going into  
solution mode

Generate insights

## PURPOSE

- Notice patterns and finding correlations
- Understand root causes
- Move beyond habitual thinking
- See system effects

Why happened?



Think analytically

Examine the conditions, interactions and patterns

Avoid jumping to the first solution

Skipping this step can lead to fixing a symptom instead of actual root cause

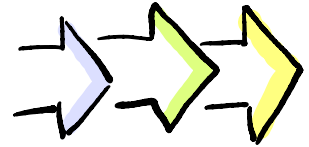
Looking forward & imagination could also help better understand the present

Decide what to do

## PURPOSE

Clear  
actions

- Move from discussion to action
- Decide which goals to pursue
- Agree actions and experiments for few (rather 1 or 2) areas of improvements



SMART  
Goals and  
Action Items

Pick the most  
important  
improvements

Focus on what  
the team can  
accomplish

Make a good balance  
between what the team has  
energy for and what is the  
most important



Close the retro

## PURPOSE

Summarize

- Reiterate actions and follow-up
- Acknowledge the team for their efforts
- Get feedback for the retro
- Finish on positive note

Reinforce  
importance of  
actions items  
implementation

Give a positive remark if  
someone shared  
something difficult or  
important

Identify ways to  
make next iteration  
better

Problem:

## The 5 Whys real life case study

Jefferson Memorial was eroding too quickly and falling apart



Possible solution: Address serious structural problems

Why? Because high power sprayers were used to clean it every 2 weeks



Possible solution: Look for new cleaning methods or chemicals

Why? Because of large amount of bird droppings on it



Possible solution: Install wires, metal spikes and netting

Why? Because the birds were attracted by the large number of spiders



Possible solution: Use pesticides

Why? Because the spiders were attracted by the large number of insects



Possible solution: Use pesticides

Why? Because the insects were attracted by the lights at dusk

The solution: TURN THE LIGHTS ON 1 HOUR LATER



Root Cause



# Applying 5 Whys for team improvements

- Wall of Shame
- Money to a piggy bank
- Push-ups

**Problem:** People are late to Stand-Up

**Solutions:**

Why?

Wrong Time

Disorganized

Team members don't see value in stand-ups

Team members don't respect time of other team members

Change time

Experiment with ideas

Why?

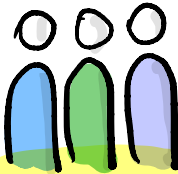
Why?

Root Cause



# What's a good action item?

Retrospectives are only meaningful if they result in a change



We are Here



In Control of the Team

- Controls ← Main focus
- Influences ← Who and How
- Adapts

Action Items

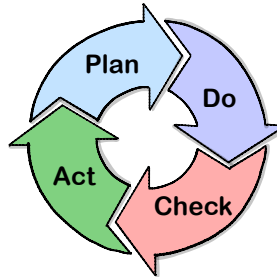
-concrete ToDo's-

Rule changes

-repeating-

Ex.: "Liis will create a wiki page and will share it with all the teams"

Ex.: "We will be running demos every two weeks"



Concrete

Small

First step

Actionable

Not:

Recommendations

Ex.: "Be brave and speak up your mind"

Wishful thinking

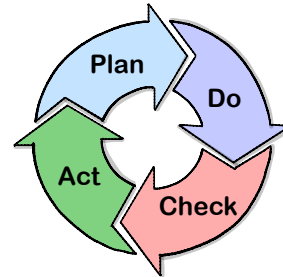
Ex.: "Collaboration between teams should be improved"

Have an Owner

## Retrospective Step 1.1: Check previous retro results

### Disciplined approach to Follow-up

1. Check if the last retro Action Items have been implemented
2. Check if we achieved the expected result or progressed towards it
3. Decide what to do next:
  - ✓ celebrate
  - continue
  - ! try something else
  - ✗ stop pursuing that goal



How you can ensure that Action Items aren't forgotten

- Big AIs can be added to Team/Sprint backlog
- Create a list or a board of ongoing experiments
  - Update Team Working Agreements
    - Update Team DoD
  - Create Calendar events

## Approximate length recommendations

N of ppl	Weekly	Biweekly	Monthly	Quarterly
Up to 5	30 min	45-60 min	1-2 h	2-4 h
5-10	45 min	1-1.5 h	1.5-3 h	3-6 h
10-15	60 min	1.5-2 h	2-4 h	4-8 h

The length of retro depends on its frequency and number of participants

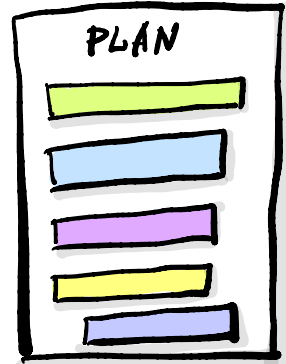
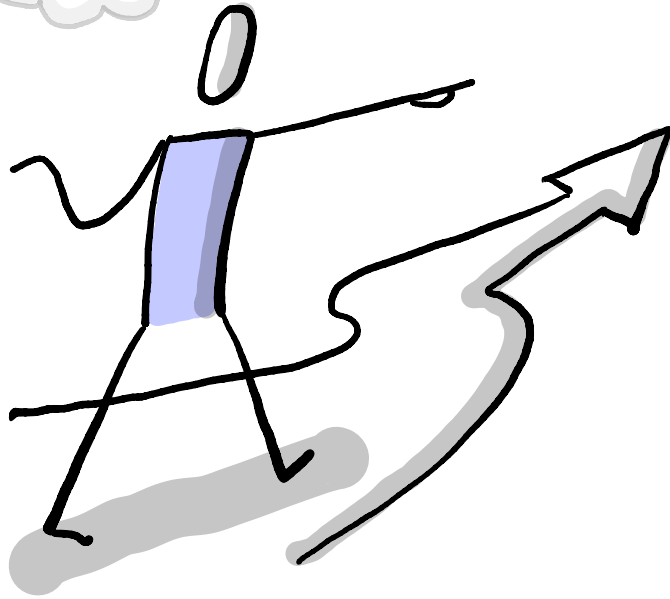
Why?

- Team building

- Challenging status quo

- Incremental Improvement

PLAN



First, define the goal and the focus of the retro

Then choose possible activities which will help to achieve that.

Start with the goal, then think about activities

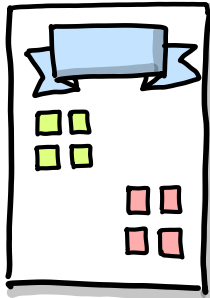


First, create the plan

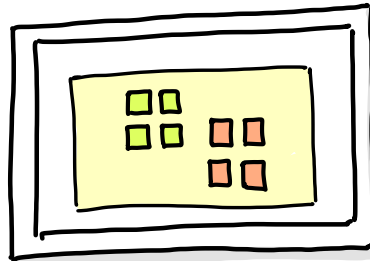


Then, decide how to adapt it to the tool at hand

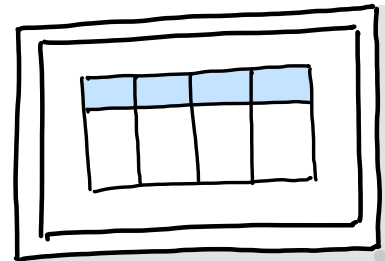
Flipchart



Online whiteboard



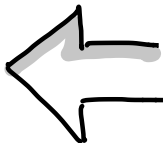
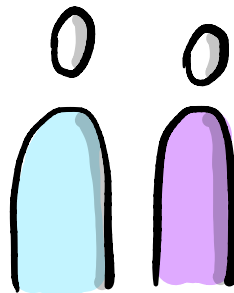
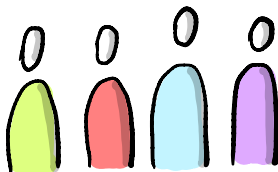
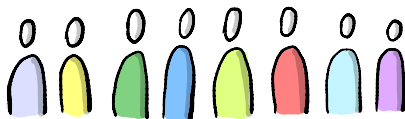
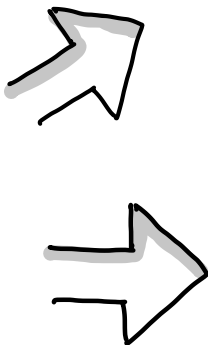
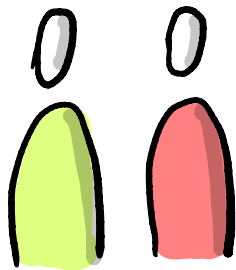
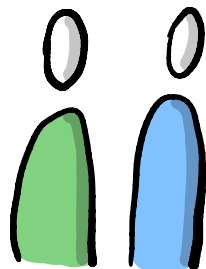
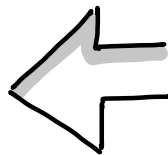
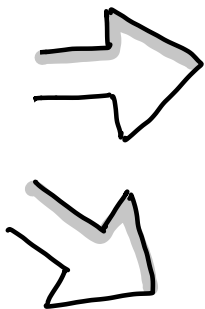
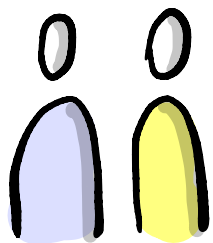
Confluence



built-in into other tools

- Miro, FigJam ← universal
- Zoom, MS Teams
- MetroRetro ← specialized for retros

Tool should not define the structure



Divide to smaller groups or pairs