



**LeanKanban**  
CONFERENCES

# The Why, What and How of Agile Retrospectives

Lean Kanban Benelux  
Heeze, November 13, 2015

Ben Linders Consulting

# On the agenda today ...

- “What” and “why” of Retrospectives
- Business Value and Benefits
- Enabling Retrospectives
- Retrospective Exercises and Examples

**With agile retrospectives teams drive their own actions!**  
**Ben Linders**

# Ben Linders

Agile, Lean, Quality & Continuous Improvement

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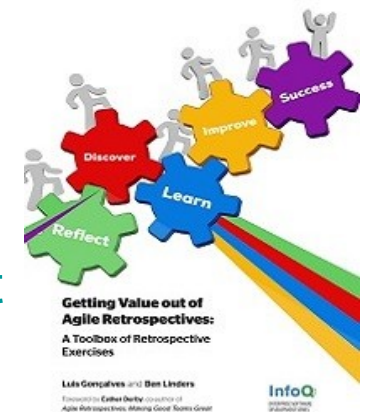


Co-Author [Getting Value out of Agile Retrospectives](#)

English Dutch French Japanese Spanish Italian Chinese  
Russian Polish German Greek Turkish Romanian

Author: [What Drives Quality & Continuous Improvement](#)

eBook: Amazon, [InfoQ](#) or [Leanpub](#)    Print [Amazon](#)



# State of Practice

## Agile Retrospectives

Doing them?

Like doing them?

Valuable?



# Agile Retrospectives

**Practice for teams to reflect on their way of working and to continuously become better in what they do.**

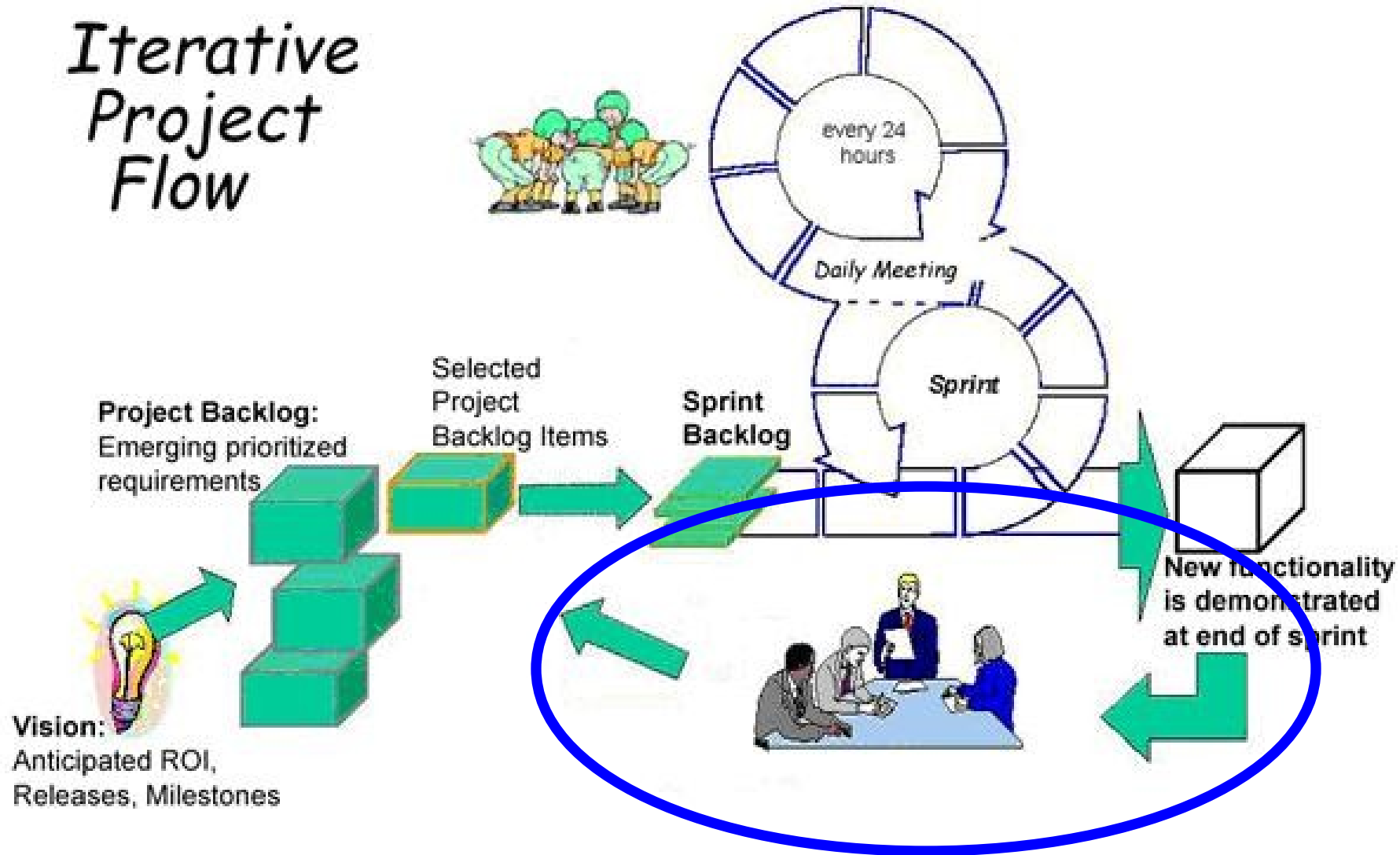
Focus upon

- Teamworking
- Self organizing



**What is an Agile Retrospectives**

# Iterative Project Flow



# Retrospectives with Kanban

- Fixed cycle / cadence  
Every week / 2 weeks, etc
- When needed  
Impediment raised / Stand up  
stop-the-line  
Issue board
- ✓ Start from where you are
- ✓ Kaizen, small continuous steps



# Prime Directive

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

Norm Kerth <http://www.retrospectives.com/>

Create an **Open Culture**  
where team member **Speak Up**  
with **Respect** for each other  
to **Learn and Improve**



**Prime Directive in 9 Languages**

**Soft Skills Matter**



# Why Retrospectives?

**To help teams to solve problems and improve themselves!**

- Becoming Agile and Lean
- Make existing processes more Agile
- Increase Value of Agile
- Less resistance to Change



# Remove Waste with Retrospectives

- Effective Teamwork
- Better Collaboration
- Development Process
- Velocity / Productivity
- Product Quality
- Costs
- Lead Time



# Team Development

Excellent teams:

- are self organized & take responsibility
- where people collaborate & interact
- and learn and improve themselves

Agile Retrospectives:

- empower teams
- help teams to take action
- enable sustainable improvement



# Enabling Retrospectives

**Adopting retrospectives is an organizational change where professionals adapt their way of working, their behavior - It won't just happen, and if not properly supported it may take much time, or even fail.**

- Purpose
- Facilitation
- Do and Evaluate



## Adopting Agile Retrospectives

# Purpose of Retrospectives

- Team's authority and responsibility on how they do their work
- No "first time right"
- Ok to fail, if you learn from it
- Continuous improvement



# Capable Retrospective Facilitators

Facilitated by capable professionals:

- Qualified facilitators
- Train: Purpose, techniques, skills
- **Mentoring & coaching**
- Share & discuss experiences



**Agile Improvement**

Effective and Efficient Retrospectives:

- **Vital few improvement actions**
- Keep invested time low

# Do and Evaluate Retrospectives

- Start with retrospectives in your first iteration
- Simple technique: **asking questions** or **boat exercise**

Evaluate the Retrospective:

- ✓ Is this useful?
- ✓ Helps to get a shared understanding?
- ✓ Do the actions make sense?
- ✓ Does meeting as a team to reflect feel good?

# Vital Few Actions

- Small Actions
- Frequent Change
- Focus on Value
- Stop Starting,  
Start Stopping
- Kanban



**Short Cycled Improvement**

**Vital Few Actions**



# Example: Failed sprint

## The Sprint that failed



### One-Word Exercise:

- Deal with Feelings
- Trust & Respect
- Empowerment

# Example: Not able to improve

The team that wasn't a team yet



5-Times Why exercise

- Getting to know each other
- Collaborate
- Skills to Improve

# Toolbox of Retrospective Exercises

- Teams differ
- Needs vary
- More value

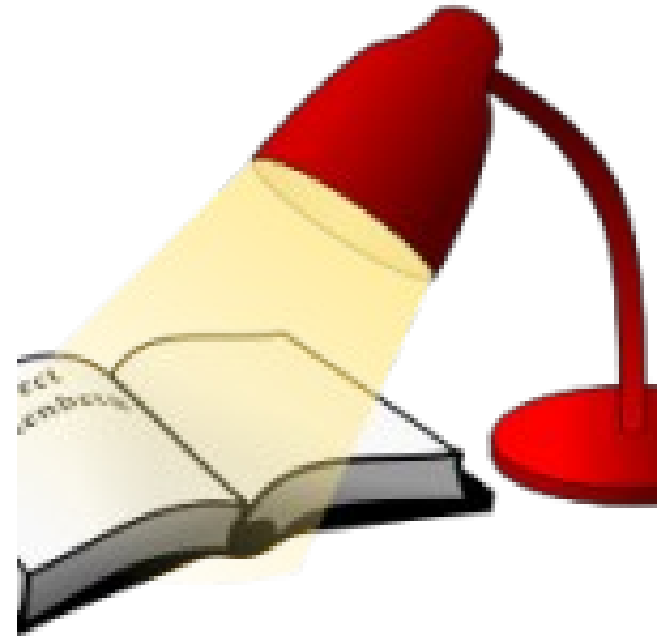
**You can plan a retrospective meeting, and think about the exercise you want to use, but be open to change it on the spot whenever needed.**



## Toolbox of Retrospective Techniques

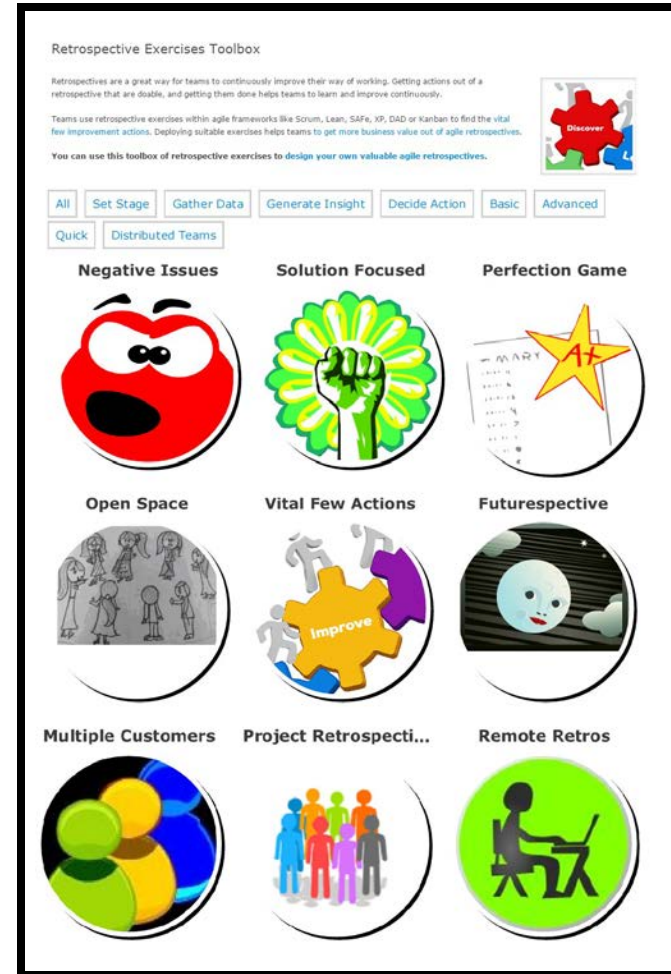
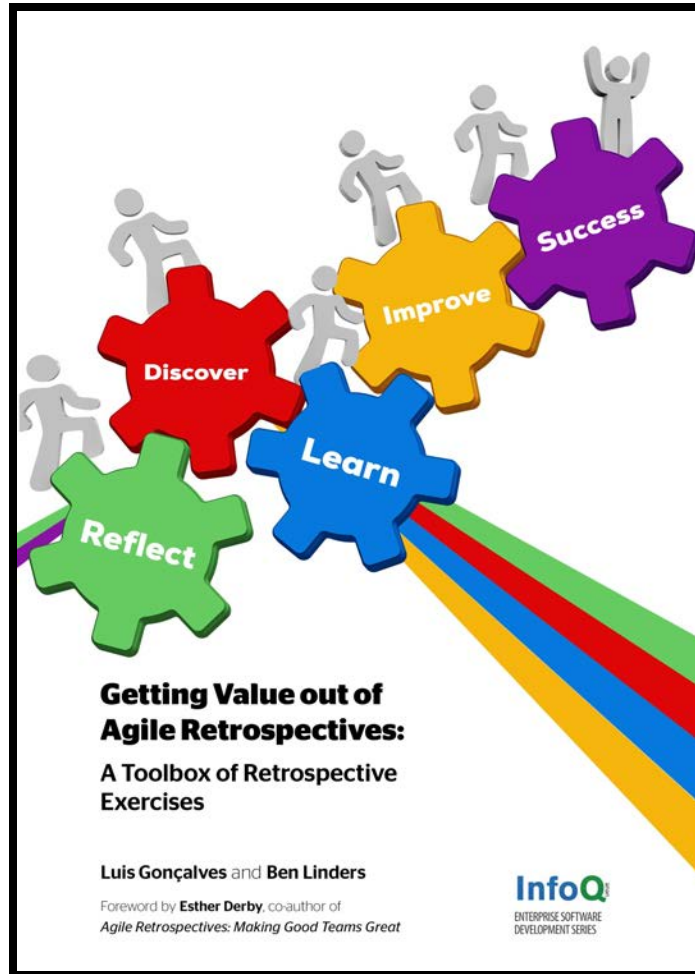
# Retrospective Exercises

- Asking questions
- One-word retrospective
- Root Cause Analysis
- Timeline
- Flow and Energy
- Asking Why?
- Strengths (Solution Focused)
- Perfection game
- Action priorities
- Retrospective of Retrospectives
- Teams with multiple customers
- Remote Teams
- Futurespectives
- Strengths/Core Qualities



**Book with Agile Retrospective Exercises**

# Designing your Retrospective



# Spicing Up your Retrospective

Valuable Agile Retrospectives:

- Well Facilitated
- Effective Exercises
- Vital Few Actions



# Questions?

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# Spicing up Retrospectives

## Workshop

- ✓ Why and How
- ✓ Business Benefits
- ✓ Facilitation Skills
- ✓ Exercises



Workshop Agile Retrospectives  
Spice up your Agile Retrospectives



# Retrospectives Book

## Getting Value out of Agile Retrospectives

By Luis Gonçalves & Ben Linders

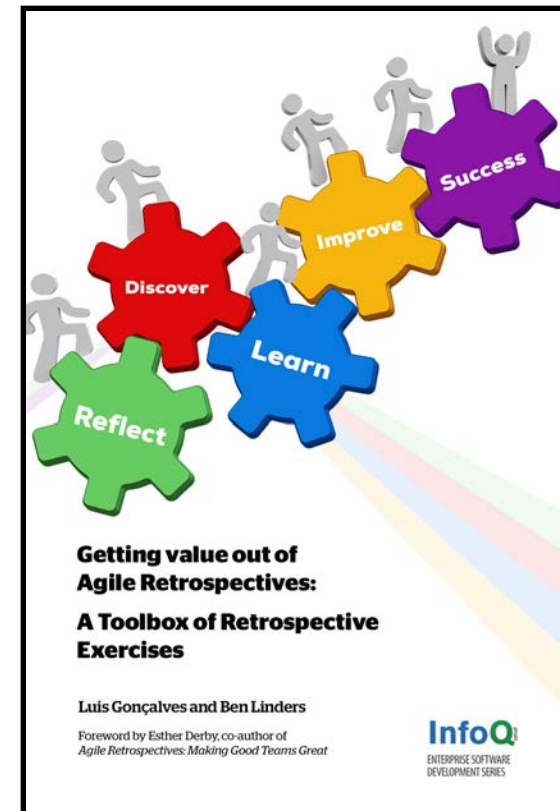
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The **suggested price is \$9,99 (excl. VAT)**; this is what we think is the real value of this book. **We leave it up to our readers to decide what they would like to pay for the book.**

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# Retrospectives Book Bundle

## Five successful retrospectives books

- Getting Value out of Agile Retrospectives
- Fun Retrospectives
- Fifty Quick Ideas to Improve Your Retrospectives
- The Retrospective Handbook
- Retrospectives for Organizational Change



**These books will make your agile retrospectives rock!  
Teams will love to do them :-).**

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Discounted price: \$30,48 (excl. VAT)

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