



# The Scrum Master: Job or Additional Skill Set for Project/Product Managers

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February 7, 2022

PROJECT AND PRODUCT MANAGER NUMBERS ARE ON THE RISE!

Antonio Nieto-Rodriguez wrote an HBR article titled, “The Project Economy Has Arrived.”

This article highlights the overwhelming importance of well-run project and product development work efforts.

WHY ARE JOB NUMBERS RISING FOR PROJECT AND PRODUCT MANAGERS?

Work efforts are rapidly becoming the [preferred method for gaining accelerated and sustainable organizational effectiveness, efficiency, value, and agility, while simultaneously driving demand for more qualified Project/Product Managers.](#)

The daily demand for organizational transformation and optimization projects and products keeps flowing into PMOs and Centers of Excellence to scale the organization's capability.

## HEARD OF SAFE®, SCRUM, AND THE SCRUM MASTER?

Nothing accelerates an organization's ability to scale capability like an Agile framework

If your large or complex organization is talking about an Agile framework, it's probably entertaining two ideas, such as [SAFe® or Scaled Agile Framework](#), at the enterprise scale, and [Scrum](#), which means someone needs to be the Scrum Master of that Universe!

Pssst: [Download the Official Scrum Guide](#) co-authored by a signatory of the Agile Manifesto that launched Agile as we know it today.

## RISE OF THE SCRUM MASTER (TOO)!

As larger or more sophisticated organizations embrace Agile, many Project/Product Managers must become or work with a Scrum Master.

*Figure 2 Scrum Master: Servant with Many Hats – Image Credit: Google Images - [www.cadenture.com/scrum](http://www.cadenture.com/scrum)*

become or work with a Scrum Master.

Why? Because many sizeable organizational product and project management efforts are too great, complex, collaborative, and rife with social/political land mines for a project/product manager to do alone or without Scrum training.

## WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW SAFe® OR THE SCRUM MASTER'S ROLE?

To get SAFe® and Scrum project and product development value, the Project/Product Manager needs to know Scrum and SAFe® themselves, even if you have a Scrum Master.

If the Project/Product Manager is the scrum master, it's clear why they must embrace, understand, and leverage the SAFe® and Scrum frameworks.

If the Project/Product Manager works with a Scrum Master, they must embrace and support the Scrum Master's role realizing organizational value, as the Project/Product Manager manager the project/product lifecycle.



*Figure 1 Credit: [www.cadenture.com/scrum](http://www.cadenture.com/scrum)*

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SCRUM MASTER AND A PROJECT/PRODUCT MANAGER

In December 2021, I wrote an [article explaining the differences between the Project and Product Manager roles](#).

Here's what differs from the Scrum Master and the Project/Product Manager's role:

[According to The Scrum Guide: The Definitive Guide to Scrum](#) – The Rules of the Game (2020), the Scrum Master's role is clearly defined and does not overlap with the Project or Product Manager unless they are wearing the Scrum Master's hat (not advisable, but it happens).

In a nutshell, Scrum requires a Scrum Master to foster an environment where:

1. A Product Owner orders the work for a complex problem into a Product Backlog.
2. The Scrum Team turns a selection of the work into an Increment of value during a Sprint.
3. The Scrum Team and its stakeholders inspect the results and adjust for the next Sprint.
4. Repeat

Finally, The Scrum Master is accountable for establishing Scrum as defined in the Scrum Guide. They do this by helping everyone understand Scrum theory and practice, both within the Scrum Team and the organization.

The Scrum Master is accountable for the Scrum Team's effectiveness. They do this by enabling the Scrum Team to improve its practices within the Scrum framework.

Please read the Scrum guide; it provides a deeper dive into the import of Scrum Masters as an ally or body of knowledge needed to wear both hats: Project/Product Manager.

### IS THE SCRUM MASTER A JOB?

Yes. Some organizations have Scrum Masters, and those individuals are guardians of the Agile Way and Scrum Framework (how they facilitate project/product and associated team development through execution).

#### INDEED.COM (2/6/2022)

- 246 JOB OPENINGS
- \$100k – \$170K
- Mainly IT/IS organizations, but other industries with highly complex projects need them too.
- Some seek certification.
- Many are remote.
- Titles Include:
  - Project Manager/Scrum Master
  - Senior Scrum Master
  - Scrum Master
  - Sr. Project Manager/Scrum Master
  - Principle Scrum Master

## BECOMING A CERTIFIED SCRUM MASTER

PMI provides options for becoming [a Disciplined Agile® Scrum Master \(DASM\)](#). Members pay only \$399.

And, [watch](#) this PMI free training video by a Disciplined Agile Trainer - @klaus Boedker (#LinkedIn), before making this career-changing decision pursuing certification.

## CALL TO ACTION

The world needs us – get equipped for a world of projects producing exponential value! If Agile and product management is heating up in your marketplace, it's only a matter of time before it intersects with your work or influences your opportunities.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John is a Seasoned HR Project Manager currently working in the Healthcare and Technology space. He has led Human Resources Operations and Talent Projects for over 20 years and is a Central Illinois PMI Chapter member who blogs and posts about HR and Project Management topics.