Up and Running Software Process Overview: High-level Planning and Two Week Sprints

High-level Planning

Getting Started:
- Define budget (monthly, overall, ?)
- Specify team member capacity based on budget
- Create initial prioritized scope and tasks

Expectation Setting:
- If there is a limit on the budget, the scope will need to flex (items may have to be pulled)
- If scope is more important, then the budget should flex

Project Backlog
(Months or Years of work)

Some tasks will take longer. The work is done when it's done, like a bridge. Some tasks will be easier to do, and we'll need more to do at times. We give and take from the project backlog accordingly.

Getting into the details results in new questions, new ideas, and new awareness of what else should be done. It's a great thing, resulting in a higher-quality outcome. Here's where new tasks, your discoveries, go.

The Sprint Process – Where the Magic Happens (every 2 weeks)

Stakeholders
Developers
Software Development Architect

1 Sprint Planning:
- Take items from backlog, usually in order
- Improve requirements
- Define priority of tasks
- Estimate tasks that don't have estimates

Expectation Setting:
- Should result in about two weeks of work
- This is done on the first day of the sprint
- It usually takes 1-4 hours

Results In:

Sprint Backlog

Feeds:

Two Weeks of Work:
- Task 1 (first priority)
- Task 2 (second priority)…

Developers
Software Development Architect
Quality Assurance Team Members

2 Development Work (most of the time is spent here for the two-week sprint):
- Pull tasks from sprint backlog by prioritization, implement tasks (write code), & test the code
- Meet daily to discuss, called "Daily Standup". Agenda: 1) Discuss what was done yesterday, 2) Make plan for today, & 3) What could cause me a problem (blockers)?
- Project backlog interaction: 1) pull more tasks if needed if the sprint backlog is completed, 2) send tasks that need more work, & 3) add new tasks based on discovery

Expectation Setting:
- The daily standup should last about 10 minutes
- If more time is needed for something, it should be another meeting

Onwards…reset.
Time to start the next sprint!

Two weeks have passed.
Let's see what's been done.

Stakeholders
Software Development Architect

4 Backlog Refinement:
- Review what's in the backlog
- Update prioritization
- Expand on the scope definition and requirements

Expectation Setting:
- This is done on the last day of the sprint or perhaps on the first day of the next two-week sprint
- It usually takes 1-2 hours

Onwards…reset.
Prepare for the next sprint.

Stakeholders
Software Development Architect

3 Sprint Review and, if applicable, QA Testing (Regression in Particular) & Release:
- Review all work that was done, and discuss ways to improve how we work
- Send tasks that need more done to the project backlog
- Prepare a release build of finished tickets, begin QA testing, and release when tests pass

Expectation Setting:
- The sprint review is done on the last day of the sprint, and it usually takes 1-2 hours
- QA testing a release takes ~25% - 75% of the sprint's length. Not every sprint needs a release
- Developers can work on the next sprint in parallel; this shouldn't affect the release (frozen)