

Agile Training and Certifications – A Conversation Starter

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PMI-ACP, CSP (CSM | CSPO), PSM (III), PSPO (II), PSD (I) PAL (I)
ICP-ACC/ATF | ORSC Series | Nexus | LeSS | SAFe

Agenda

- **What's the right agile certification for me?**
- **Scrum Alliance Roadmap**
- **Scrum.Org Roadmap**
- **PMI Roadmap**
- **Scrum Master – Some Comparisons**
- **Product Owner – Some Comparisons**
- **Bob and Nitin's journey**
- **So what's your path?**



Some Certification Thoughts

What is the right Agile Certification for me? **Well - It Depends!**

- If you are trying to break in as the agile world and having no agile certificate, then start with a [CSM](#) or [PSM](#).
- If you need to increase adaptability in Agile technologies, then you can choose [PMI-ACP®](#)
- If you are supposed to work on a project where the SAFe framework is going to use, for leading a Lean/Agile change initiative in a large software enterprise, pursue the [SAFe Agilist \(SA\)](#) certification
- If you have significant experience in Agile approaches and want to move to become a professional Agile Coach, then you should consider [Agile Certified Coach \(ICP-ACC\)](#)
- All the above programs will help you to earn the required 70 SEUs to apply for the [CSP](#) which shows your skills at an advanced level and showcase you as an experienced Scrum practitioner.



No – we're not!

There is a lot more behind this....



Scrum Alliance

Foundational & Advanced Certifications

The progressive course model offers a staged, two-year journey that allows participants to choose an educational track that improves core Scrum knowledge, builds skill sets, and provides the necessary tools to evolve as an Agile practitioner, from Scrum foundations to advanced practice.



Source: <https://www.scrumalliance.org/get-certified>



Scrum Alliance

Guide Level Certifications

Guide Level certifications are designed to authorize well-qualified coaches and trainers as educators and mentors in the Scrum framework. These are Scrum and Agile practitioners whose demonstrated ability and applied knowledge have been certified to be essential in the instruction of foundational CSM and CSPO candidates, small Scrum Team groups within an organization, or entire companies in the midst of an Agile transformation.



CST

As a **Certified Scrum Trainer**, you'll help others understand the principles and values that form the foundation of Scrum. And you'll grow as an individual and professional as you find creative ways to help organizations, and your peers adopt this Agile framework and capitalize on its benefits.



CEC

Scrum Alliance **Certified Enterprise CoachesSM (CECs)** are Scrum experts in both theory and practice. They have in-depth understanding of the practices and principles of Scrum and real-world experience in actual Scrum organizations. As a CEC, you will help companies navigate the difficult process of becoming an Agile organization.



CTC

A **Certified Team Coach** works with Scrum teams, stakeholders, and management to improve performance and outcomes. Unlike a ScrumMaster®, a Certified Team Coach works across multiple teams. And unlike a Certified Enterprise Coach, a Certified Team Coach focuses on a subset of an organization in a project or program, or across multiple teams.

Scrum.org

Professional Scrum Certifications & Assessments

Scrum.org provides four families of Professional Scrum certification assessments. These assessments cover a range of areas related to the knowledge and real world usage of Scrum. Passing these credible and consistent assessments is highly regarded as true industry certification by individuals, organizations and industry associations.

Professional SCRUM MASTER

PSM

There are three levels of Professional Scrum Master Assessments (foundation, intermediate and advanced) that validate and certify your knowledge of Scrum and ability to apply that knowledge.

Level I - Foundation



Demonstration of a fundamental level of Scrum mastery. PSM I certificate holders prove that they understand Scrum as described in the Scrum Guide and the concepts of applying Scrum. PSM I holders have a consistent terminology and approach to Scrum.

Level II - Intermediate



Demonstration of an advanced level of Scrum mastery. PSM II certificate holders prove that they have an understanding of the underlying principles of Scrum and can effectively apply Scrum in complex, real-world situations.

Level III - Advanced



Demonstration of a distinguished level of Scrum mastery. PSM III certificate holders have a deep understanding of the application and practices of Scrum and the Scrum Values in a variety of complex team and organizational situations.

 [Scrum.org/Assessments](https://www.scrum.org/Assessments)



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Scrum.org

Professional Scrum PRODUCT OWNER

PSPO

There are two levels of Professional Scrum Product Owner Assessments (intermediate and advanced) that validate and certify your knowledge Scrum Product Ownership and ability to apply that knowledge.

Level I - Intermediate



Demonstration of an intermediate understanding of the Scrum framework. PSPO I certificate holders exhibit a dedication to continued professional development, and a high level of commitment to their field of practice.

Level II - Advanced



Demonstration of an advanced level of understanding of how the Scrum framework can support the creation of value, and how to achieve it in the real world. PSPO II certificate holders exhibit a high level of professionalism and commitment to delivering value using Scrum.

SCALED Professional Scrum

SPS



The Scaled Professional Scrum Assessment validates and certifies your knowledge of how to scale Scrum and the use of the Nexus Framework and ability to apply that knowledge.

Professional Scrum DEVELOPER

PSD



The Professional Scrum Developer Assessment is structured to validate and certify your knowledge of the practices and techniques that support building complex software as a member of a Scrum Team and ability to apply that knowledge.

Professional Scrum AGILE LEADERSHIP

PAL



The Professional Agile Leadership Assessment validates and certifies your knowledge of how agility adds value and why leadership understanding, sponsorship, and support of Agile practices are essential.

Professional Scrum WITH KANBAN

PSK



The Professional Scrum with Kanban Assessment validates and certifies your knowledge of how Scrum Teams can use Scrum with Kanban to support value creation, measurement and delivery.

PMI – Agile Certified Practitioner (ACP)

If you're experienced using agile approaches, have good collaboration skills, eagerly embrace complexity and thrive on rapid response times, then your talents are in demand.

- Spans many approaches to agile such as Scrum, Kanban, Lean, extreme programming (XP) and test-driven development (TDD). So it will increase your versatility, wherever your projects may take you.
- Cost of exam = about \$435 for PMI members, \$495 for non-members.

PMI Agile Certification Eligibility Requirements	
Requirement	Description
General Project Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2,000 hours working on project teams ▪ These hours must be earned within the last 5 years ▪ Active PMP® or PgMP® will satisfy this requirement
Agile Project Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1500 hours working on agile project teams or with agile methodologies ▪ These hours are in addition to the 2,000 hours required in "general project experience" ▪ These hours must be earned within the last 3 years
Training in Agile Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 21 contact hours ▪ Hours must be earned in agile practices
Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tests knowledge of agile fundamentals

3 hour exam same in environment as PMP

Scrum Master – Some Comparisons

	CSM	PSM I	PSM II/III
Organization	ScrumAlliance	Scrum.Org	Scrum.Org
Cost	About \$1200	\$150	\$250/\$500
Course Required?	Yes	N/A	N/A
Course Duration	2 – 3 days	N/A	N/A
Track	N/A	N/A	N/A
Exam Timing	60 min	60 min	90 min / 120 min
Prerequisite?	None	None	Pass PSM I / II with 85%
Minimal Score Needed	24/35 (Multiple Choice)	85% (Multiple Choice)	85% (Multiple Choice & essay)
Certification Acquired	CSM	PSM I	PSM II / PSM III
Certification Expire?	Yes (must be renewed every 2 years)	No	No
PDU Eligible Course?	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: PSM I can be taken online for the assessment fee. No in-person class participation needed.



Product Owner– Some Comparisons

	CSPO	PSPO I	PSPO II
Organization	ScrumAlliance	Scrum.Org	Scrum.Org
Cost	About \$1200	\$200	\$500
Course Required?	Yes	No	No
Course Duration	2 days	N/A	N/A
Track	N/A	N/A	N/A
Prerequisite?	None	None	PSPO I Pass with 85%
Minimal Score Needed	No Exam	85% (Multiple Choice)	85% (Multiple Choice & essay)
Test Duration	N/A	1 Hour	2 Hours
Certification Acquired	CSPO	PSPO I	PSPO II
Certification Expire?	Yes (must be renewed every 2 years)	No	No
PDU Eligible Course?	Yes	Yes	Yes

Update: The PSPO I is now an open assessment and doesn't need a mandatory in-person class. Cost \$200.



Bob's Journey...

Basic Scrum Certifications	Bob's comments
CSM	This C ertified S crum M aster certification is the highest recognized in the industry. It involves taking a 2-3 day class that is taught by a C ertified S crum T rainer (CST). After the class you need to take an on-line test that you can pass (if you paid attention during the class). The Scrum Alliance has an advanced CSM-A to demonstrate over 1 year of experience.
PSM	Don't need if have CSM (opinion only)
Advanced Scrum Certifications	
CSP	Demonstrates advanced experience working with Scrum teams to allow you to be placed in leadership roles.
PSM II / PSM III	Don't need if have CSP (opinion only) *Nitin differs (See ahead)



Bob's Journey (continued)...

Agile Certifications	Bob's comments
PMI-ACP (PMI Agile Certified Practitioner)	This is from the Project Management Institute who is behind the industry recognized PMP certification. It does not have the name recognition like the CSM but it represents a much broader knowledge of agile. It touches on Scrum but it also covers other agile areas to broaden your knowledge. The PMI-ACP is starting to catch on and being that PMI is behind it I would anticipate that this would be a very valuable certification to hold in the future. This certification requires that you can demonstrate 3500 hours of experience which is why I believe the industry will place a higher value on it (eventually)
Scaling	
CLP (Certified Less Practitioner)	This scaling framework is very popular in Europe and it requires an organization to fully transform. Craig Larman teaches an excellent class that reinforces how you are following Scrum and you will learn a great deal.
SaFE (Scaled Agile Framework)	Don't need if company is not using SaFE
SPS (Scaled Professional Scrum)	Next on my list! This is an exam based certification that revolves around your understanding of Nexus. You must fully understand Scrum before you would attempt to try this.

Bob's Journey (continued)...

Coaching / Facilitation Certifications from ICAgile

ICP-ATF
(Professional Agile Team
Facilitation)

Attending these classes changed my perspective and trajectory. I was fortunate to have Lyssa Adkins as the instructor and it really changed me.

I took this as part of a Boot-camp where I attended the 2 day Facilitation and 3 day Coaching class during the same week in Boston. This is a great class for an experienced Scrum Master who is serious and really wants to grow.

ICP-ACC
(Professional Agile Coach)

See above comment

ICE-AC
(Expert Agile Coach)

Competency based Agile Coaching certification where you must demonstrate competency across the four critical areas (Coaching, Facilitation, Training, and Facilitation).

This is a very stringent competency based certification with criteria that you must meet in each area. As of this writing there are less than 200 people possess this certification. This is the most difficult agile certification that I have obtained.



Nitin's Journey – Knowledge Based Certifications

Basic Scrum Certifications	Nitin's comments
CSM, CSPO	<p>Took the 2-day, in-person CSM course with Michael James, who created www.scrumtrainingseries.com</p> <p>Helped solidify foundations and clear misconceptions.</p> <p>Also took the 2-day, in-person CSPO with David Bulkin.</p> <p>Have played both roles and these are considered intro-level certifications</p>
PSM, PSPO, PSD, PAL(I)	<p>Offer a solid foundation and are completely based on the Scrum Guide, as authored by Jeff Sutherland and Ken Schwaber. Credible, tough assessments</p>

Advanced Scrum Certifications	
CSP	<p>Took a proctored exam (now defunct). The focus is beyond Scrum. I compare this to the PMI-ACP.</p>
PSM II / PSM III PSPO II PSE (now defunct)	<p>Reveals whether the certificate holder truly grasps the depths of Scrum, and that what is not</p>



Nitin's Journey (Continued)

PMI Certification	Nitin's comments
PMI-ACP	<p>Per informal PMI statistics certified #7 in NJ (2012)</p> <p>Did a lot of self-study after already having taken courses from the ScrumAlliance and assessments from Scrum.Org</p> <p>I compare this to the CSP</p>



Nitin's Journey (Scaling)

Advanced Certifications	Nitin's comments
Nexus "Plank Owner"	<p>Took the first ever scaling course offered by Ken Schwaber in Dec 2014 at the Scrum.Org headquarters in MA, USA. At that time, there was no certification offered and this was later renamed to Scaled Professional Scrum (SPS).</p> <p>This builds upon Scrum.</p>
Certified LeSS Practitioner (CLP)	<p>Took in April 2014, with Craig Larman (NY) which also added a Scaling Scrum Fundamentals via the ScrumAlliance.</p> <p>This builds upon Scrum.</p>
SAFe SPC (Scaled Agile Framework Program Consultant)	<p>Completed in July 2015 with Ken France.</p> <p>I had already started scaling teams around 2012 at a Program level, irrespective of the certifications above.</p> <p>The formal training always helps bring new ideas, discipline and see what challenges scaling brings.</p>



Nitin's Journey (Professional Coaching)

Coaching / Certifications

ICP-ACC / ATF

Took these course in 2014 with Lyssa Adkins and Michael Spayd.

This led to further curiosity and wanting to hone my professional coaching skills

The focus is on Agile Coaching

ORSC Series

Organization and Relationship Systems Coaching (ORSC) via CRR Global

Took these courses in MN, USA and Canada over time and completed the entire series

Focus is not 1:1 but rather on a pair, triad or group

I also coached family situations

CTI

CTI was the very first coach training organization to be certified by the International Coaching Federation (ICF).

Focus is on 1:1 and not specific to agile

Nitin is also an active member of ICF-NJ



So what's your path?

Just ONE Potential Path:

1. Obtain a basic Scrum Certification (CSM or PSM I) and start working with a team.
2. Pursue more advanced certifications:
 - a) Consider the (A-CSM / CSP) or (PSM II / PSM III) to get a deeper understanding of Scrum that you will use to help your team(s).
 - b) Consider the PMI-ACP to broaden your knowledge about agile practices beyond Scrum.
3. Pursue the ICP-ATF/ACC if you want to move toward Agile Coaching and work with more teams.
4. See where you are and keep on learning new things. Before you know it you be seen as a agile leader in your organization and you too will have the “alphabet soup” of agile certifications 😊

The key is to work with agile teams to understand their challenges and bring ideas to help them live and work following agile values and principles.



Questions?



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