

Scrum Discipline Reset Playbook & Red Flag Cheat Sheet

Objective

Quick-start guide to reset broken Scrum teams back to functional, high-performing, accountable delivery.

Standup Red Flag Cheat Sheet

Red Flag Statement	Translation
"I was assigned this yesterday."	Management is assigning work.
"I don't know what this ticket means."	Ticket entered sprint unrefined.
"We'll figure it out as we go."	Acceptance criteria missing.
"I'm waiting on Bob."	Dependency management failure.
"We're doing our best."	Commitment ambiguity.
"We'll just see how far we get."	No sprint commitment discipline.
"Still need clarification."	Backlog grooming failure.
"I'm blocked but didn't mention it earlier."	Transparency failure.

Scrum Discipline Reset Playbook

Step 1 — Ban Generic Language

- Eliminate the term "Scrum Team" if it causes ambiguity.
- Always refer to explicit Product Team names (e.g. "Payments API Team", "Onboarding Team").

Step 2 — Assign Clear Ownership

- Product Owner owns prioritization and backlog grooming.
- Developers own task pull and delivery.
- Scrum Master owns process flow and blocker removal.

Step 3 — Enforce Definition of Ready (DoR)

- Ticket is fully refined, estimated, dependencies cleared.
- Acceptance Criteria written and reviewed.
- No ticket enters sprint without full DoR compliance.

Step 4 — Tighten Tool Discipline

- One Jira board per Product Team.
- No shared global sprints across multiple teams.
- No unassigned tickets allowed in active sprints.

Step 5 — Audit Standups Actively

- Use Red Flag Cheat Sheet (below) to monitor daily standups.
- Stop the meeting and correct process violations in real-time.

Step 6 — Clarify Pull Process

- No work starts until a dev pulls it.
- No assignments during standups or by management.
- Tickets must be self-assigned after review and understanding.

Step 7 — Sprint Planning Lockdown

- Only fully ready tickets are considered.
- PO and team jointly finalize sprint backlog.
- SM enforces readiness gate.

Step 8 — Establish Accountability Culture

- No "we tried our best" language.
- Ownership and accountability are explicit.
- Velocity metrics tracked per team, not blended across org.

Key Principle

Scrum fails when ambiguity is allowed. Precision in language, ownership, and process restores delivery discipline.