

OPTILEARN

Who are Optilearn?

We are a small Agile Consultancy who offer accredited Scrum training, professional coaching and both short and long term consulting engagements.



Ryan is the primary trainer at Optilearn. He is a Professional Scrum Trainer with scrum.org and offers official training courses using accredited material. He also holds Qualified Teacher Status.

Lucy handles all of the communication at Optilearn. If you need support, she's the one who'll be helping you. Lucy holds Qualified Teacher Status and is hugely experienced at delivering training.



If you are interested in hearing more about our values and the work we do, please check out our website:

www.optilearn.co.uk

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POWERFUL QUESTIONS

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How to use this deck

Powerful questions are purposeful and intentional. They are used sparingly for impact and evidence gathering. This deck contains 50 powerful questions that can create discussions around difficult truths.

When using this deck, we hope you find conversations are free-flowing and honest. Oftentimes teams can take offence at probing and deep questions by a colleague, however when an inanimate card asks it, it dehumanises it.

Shuffle the deck and turn over a card. Read the question aloud and see where it takes you. We recommend a 15 minute timebox for each card.

Perhaps you could use a new one with your teams every day?

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**If our Sprint Backlog
was a puzzle, are
there any pieces
missing that we
need to achieve the
Sprint Goal?**

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**If a new team
member joined us,
what would they
think is good about
our team? What
would they think is
less good?**

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If we could look into
the future, what are
the main
impediments our
team is facing in six
months time?

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If each of you had a
magic wand, what
would you wish for
our team or our
Product?

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**If someone analysed
our Definition of
Done, what
strengths and
weaknesses would
they identify?**

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**What is an
uncomfortable truth
for our team that we
don't often talk
about?**

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How do we
quantitatively prove
we are improving
the value of our
Product or process
over time?

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If we evaluated our
customer value
delivery on a scale
of awful to
awesome, what are
we?

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**What do we
hypothesise our
stakeholders will
think about our next
release?**

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**What single factor
impacts our capacity
the most? How could
we address it?**

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When was the last
time we said 'We
can't really do
anything about that?'
Was it really true?


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If you were the
Product Owner, what
do you see as the
largest market
opportunity for our
Product?


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If we compared our process now against where we were three months ago, what improvements have we made?

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If someone asked for a single sentence explaining our Product's value proposition, what would you say?

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What is most important to us: new functionality, Product quality, or innovation? What would our stakeholders say?

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If there was no one else to call on, do we have all the skills in our team to be able to keep our Product alive?

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**Someone comes to
you and says, 'The
quality of your
Product is poor'.
What evidence do
you have to defend
yourselves?**

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**Do our stakeholders
trust in our team's
ability to deliver
usable increments
on a frequent
cadence?**

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**What is our team
identity in terms of
our values, qualities
and realities?**

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**Which event in our
team's calendar is
most impactful for
you and why?**

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**If we irretrievably
deleted our Product
and had to restart it,
what would we do
differently this time
around?**

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**If we could design
the perfect
developer for our
Product, what would
they be like?**

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**Why is our current
delivery framework
appropriate for our
Product? Is there
anything we don't
like?**

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**Can you construct an
argument to suggest
why the 'customer is
always right'? How
about, why the
'developer is always
right'?**

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**What could we do as
a team to decrease
our time to market?**

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**Why do you think it is
important to reflect
on our process
frequently? What do
we learn from it?**

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**What might the
benefits be if we
lengthen or shorten
our release
cadence?**

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**What information
would help our team
determine the
current value of our
Product?**

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**How do we
demonstrate respect
to one another?**

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**When was the last
time our team made
a mistake? How did
we mitigate the risk
of reoccurrence?**

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How are we
organised to
minimise the risk of
siloed knowledge
and skills?

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When was the last
time we changed our
approach
significantly because
of new information?
Did we handle it
well?

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**What assumptions
or beliefs do you
consider to be
embedded in our
organisation?**

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**In five years time,
what do you imagine
our Product will be
like?**

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Place the following
in order of
importance to our
team: Product
quality, customer
perception, and
delivering
sustainably.

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If we stopped
developing our
Product immediately,
what would happen?

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**Are we 'value
creators' or 'plan
executors'?**

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**What is going so well
for our team right
now that we don't
want to change?**

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**What are the
barriers to
knowledge sharing
in our organisation
and how might we
overcome them?**

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**What do we have to
do less of in order
for our team to be
able to achieve
more?**

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**What steps will we
take if our team
realises its not on
track to deliver what
we agreed?**

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**How are we held to
account by our
stakeholders and
organisation?**

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**What would it take to
make our
retrospectives
perfect?**

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**If our Product was a
person, what would
they be like and
why?**

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If we notice that our capacity is over-filled, what steps will we take to rectify that?

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Does our Product Backlog contain any work that no one in our team understands?

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**How frequently do
we have items left
over in our plan?
What do we typically
do with them?**

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**On a scale from 0%
to 100%, what level
of technical debt
does our Product
currently possess?**

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Is our Product Backlog the right size? When was the last time we reviewed its appropriateness?

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Are the improvements we are currently making to our Product the best use of our budget?

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