Top Agile Certifications: Update for 2024

04 January 2024 10:01

Introduction

There's no substitute for experience. However, certifications can be a valuable tool for propelling one's career. Employers want candidates and employees with up-to-date knowledge and skills, and certifications demonstrate a person's mastery of the respective subject. This article takes a look at Agile related certifications.

Demand and other factors can change over time. For that reason, we periodically refresh our review. This article provides the latest scoop.

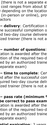
Top Agile Certifications

We compiled and analyzed data from 12 sources: Agile Alliance, Agile Sherpas, Exceptional PMI and PMO Solutions, Forbes, Indeed, LearnKitchen, LogicPlanton, MondayCertify.com, and Tech Republic – to determine the general consensus on the top Agile certifications. Six emerged. Here they are:

- Certified ScrumMaster (CSM)
- Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO)
- Certified SAFe Agilist (SA)
- PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)
- Certified Professional Scrum Master (PSM 1)
- Certified Professional Scrum Product Owner (PSPO 1)

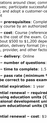
Details follow. Note: Prerequisites, costs, and other data are subject to change by the governing organizations.

Profile of Each Certification



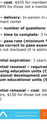
Certified ScrumMaster (CSM)

- **Certification**: Certified ScrumMaster
- **Abbreviation for certification**: CSM
- **Governing organization + name**: Scrum Alliance
- **Governing organization + website**: https://www.scrumalliance.org
- **Short description of certification**: Demonstrates a deep understanding of Scrum including practical ways to apply it on one's team and in one's organization
- **Exam + cost**: Curriculum (reference) above includes the cost of the exam. Cost ranges from $400 to $1,200 depending on the location, delivery format (in person or online), provider, and other factors
- **Exam + delivery**: Online
- **Exam + number of questions**: 50
- **Exam + time to complete**: 1 hour
- **Exam + pass rate (minimum % that must be correct to pass exam)**: 74%
- **Prerequisite expiration**: 2 years
- **Credential renewal + required continuing education units (CEUs) or professional development units (PDUs) or Scrum educational units (SEUs)**: 20 SEUs
- **Credential renewal + cost**: $100



Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO)

- **Certification**: Certified Scrum Product Owner
- **Abbreviation for certification**: CSPO
- **Governing organization + name**: Scrum Alliance
- **Governing organization + website**: https://www.scrumalliance.org
- **Short description of certification**: Demonstrates a deep understanding of Scrum principles and practices, as well as the role and responsibilities of a Product Owner in the Scrum framework
- **Exam + prerequisites**: Certification is awarded after the successful completion of the required two-day course delivered by an authorized trainer (there is not a separate exam)
- **Exam + cost**: Certification is awarded after the successful completion of the required two-day course delivered by an authorized trainer (there is not a separate exam). Course cost ranges from about $500 to $1,200 depending on the location, delivery format (in-person or online), provider, and other factors
- **Exam + delivery**: Certification is awarded after the successful completion of the required two-day course delivered by an authorized trainer (there is not a separate exam)
- **Exam + number of questions**: 0 (certification is awarded after the successful completion of the required two-day course delivered by an authorized trainer (there is not a separate exam)
- **Exam + time to complete**: Certification is awarded after the successful completion of the required two-day course delivered by an authorized trainer (there is not a separate exam)
- **Exam + pass rate (minimum % that must be correct to pass exam)**: 0 (certification is awarded after the successful completion of the required two-day course delivered by an authorized trainer (there is not a separate exam)
- **Prerequisite expiration**: 2 years
- **Credential renewal + required continuing education units (CEUs) or professional development units (PDUs) or Scrum educational units (SEUs)**: 20 SEUs
- **Credential renewal + cost**: $100



Certified SAFe Agilist (SA)

- **Certification**: Certified SAFe Agilist
- **Abbreviation for certification**: SA
- **Governing organization + name**: Scaled Agile
- **Governing organization + website**: https://scaledagile.com
- **Short description of certification**: Demonstrates knowledge of Lean-Agile Leadership, Lean-Agile and Technical Agility and organize around the flow of value; align teams to customer-centric business objectives; participate successfully in SAFe events; and adapt a customer-centric mindset
- **Exam + prerequisites**: Completion of a two-day course by an authorized trainer
- **Exam + cost**: Course cost ranges from about $500 to $1,200 depending on the location, delivery format (in-person or online), provider, and other factors
- **Exam + delivery**: Online
- **Exam + number of questions**: 45
- **Exam + time to complete**: 1.5 hours
- **Exam + pass rate (minimum % that must be correct to pass exam)**: 85%
- **Prerequisite expiration**: 1 year
- **Credential renewal + required continuing education units (CEUs) or professional development units (PDUs) or Scrum educational units (SEUs)**: 10 PDUs
- **Credential renewal + cost**: $100

PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)

- **Certification**: PMI Agile Certified Practitioner
- **Abbreviation for certification**: PMI-ACP
- **Governing organization + name**: Project Management Institute
- **Governing organization + website**: https://www.pmi.org
- **Short description of certification**: Demonstrates knowledge of the PMI's Agile Practitioner Body of Knowledge; methodologies (such as Scrum, Kanban, Lean)
- **Exam + prerequisites**: 2,000 hours of project management experience; 1,500 hours of Agile experience; and 21 hours of Agile training
- **Exam + cost**: $435 for members of the PMI; $495 for those not a member of the PMI
- **Exam + delivery**: In-person in an assessment center
- **Exam + number of questions**: 120
- **Exam + time to complete**: 3 hours
- **Exam + pass rate (minimum % that must be correct to pass exam)**: 85%
- **Prerequisite expiration**: 1 year
- **Credential renewal + required continuing education units (CEUs) or professional development units (PDUs) or Scrum educational units (SEUs)**: 30 PDUs
- **Credential renewal + cost**: $100

Certified Professional Scrum Master (PSM 1)

- **Certification**: Certified Professional Scrum Master
- **Abbreviation for certification**: PSM 1
- **Governing organization + name**: Scrum.org
- **Governing organization + website**: https://www.scrum.org
- **Short description of certification**: Validates knowledge of the Scrum framework and one's ability to support and enable value creation and delivery
- **Exam + prerequisites**: A course is recommended but not required
- **Exam + cost**: $150
- **Exam + delivery**: Online
- **Exam + number of questions**: 80
- **Exam + time to complete**: 1 hour
- **Exam + pass rate (minimum % that must be correct to pass exam)**: 85%
- **Prerequisite expiration**: Certification does not expire
- **Credential renewal + required continuing education units (CEUs) or professional development units (PDUs) or Scrum educational units (SEUs)**: Not applicable
- **Credential renewal + cost**: Not applicable as certification does not expire

Certified Professional Scrum Product Owner (PSPO 1)

- **Certification**: Certified Professional Scrum Product Owner
- **Abbreviation for certification**: PSPO 1
- **Governing organization + name**: Scrum.org
- **Governing organization + website**: https://www.scrum.org
- **Short description of certification**: Validates knowledge of the Scrum framework and one's ability to support and enable value creation and delivery
- **Exam + prerequisites**: A course is recommended but not required
- **Exam + cost**: $150
- **Exam + delivery**: Online
- **Exam + number of questions**: 80
- **Exam + time to complete**: 1 hour
- **Exam + pass rate (minimum % that must be correct to pass exam)**: 85%
- **Prerequisite expiration**: Certification does not expire
- **Credential renewal + required continuing education units (CEUs) or professional development units (PDUs) or Scrum educational units (SEUs)**: Not applicable
- **Credential renewal + cost**: Not applicable as certification does not expire

Conclusion

Certifications can provide significant value for professionals looking to enhance their skills and credibility in the marketplace. Employers often prefer to hire certified professionals, and those who invest in professional credentials typically enjoy larger salaries. Informed by data from multiple sources, this article identified and profiled the top Agile certifications: Certified ScrumMaster (CSM), Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO), Certified SAFe Agilist (SA), PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP), Certified Professional Scrum Master (PSM 1), and Certified Professional Scrum Product Owner (PSPO 1). Those interested in securing one or more Agile certifications can leverage the information presented in this article to avoid in their decision making.

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About Scott M. Graffius

Scott M. Graffius, Founder of Excel Adaptity, is an expert practitioner and thought leader in agile, project, program, portfolio, and PMO management. He has generated over $1.5 billion of business value in aggregate for Global Fortune 500 companies and other organizations he has served in various roles. He is a prolific author and highly sought after international keynote speaker, having presented at 89 conferences and other events across 25 countries. Businesses, professional associations, governments, and universities have used and featured him and his work/research including Microsoft, Oracle, Amazon, Cisco, Gartner, ITI, Project Management Institute, IEEE, SANS Institute, National Academy of Sciences, United States Department of Energy, Arizonian Public Health Research Institute, Yale University, Tufts University, and many others.

Visit https://ScottGraffius.com to learn more, and connect with Scott on:

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About Agile Scrum: Your Quick Start Guide with Step-by-Step Instructions

Scott M. Graffius

Shifting customer needs are common in today's marketplace. Businesses must be adaptive and responsive to change while delivering an exceptional customer experience to be competitive.

There are a variety of frameworks supporting the development of products and services, and most approaches fall into one of two broad categories: traditional or agile. Traditional practices such as waterfall engage sequential development, while agile involves iterative and incremental deliverables. Organizations are increasingly embracing agile to manage projects, and best meet their business needs of rapid response to change, fast delivery speed, and more.

With clear and easy to follow step-by-step instructions, **Scott M. Graffius**'s award-winning ***Agile Scrum: Your Quick Start Guide with Step-by-Step Instructions*** helps the reader:

- Implement and use the most popular agile framework—Scrum;
- Deliver products in short cycles with rapid adaptation to change, fast time-to-market, and continuous improvement; and
- Support innovation and drive competitive advantage.

Hailed by Literary Titan as "the book highlights the versatility of Scrum beautifully."

Winner of 17 first place awards.

Agile Scrum: Your Quick Start Guide with Step-by-Step Instructions is available in paperback and ebook/Kindle worldwide. Some links by country follow.

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- Mexico
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- United States
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About *Agile Transformation: A Brief Story of How an Entertainment Company Developed New Capabilities and Unlocked Business Agility to Thrive in an Era of Rapid Change*

Book available in the United States: bit.ly/at-us the rest of the world: bit.ly/at-world

Thriving in today's marketplace frequently depends on making a transformation to become more agile. Those successful in the transition enjoy faster delivery speed and ROI, higher satisfaction, continuous improvement, and additional benefits.

Based on actual events, ***Agile Transformation: A Brief Story of How an Entertainment Company Developed New Capabilities and Unlocked Business Agility to Thrive in an Era of Rapid Change*** provides a quick (60-90 minute) read about a successful agile transformation at a multinational entertainment and media company, told from the author's perspective as an agile coach.

The award-winning book by **Scott M. Graffius** is available in paperback and ebook/Kindle worldwide. Some links by country follow.

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- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
- More countries

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Exceptional Agility — part of Exceptional PPM and PMO Solutions — provides organizations with advisory, training, speaking, embedded talent, and facilitative consulting services to help them build and advance their agile project, program, portfolio, and PMO management capabilities and results to best realize their strategic objectives and initiatives, making them more competitive and valuable.

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