

Scrum Master vs. Project Manager

A quick-reference cheat sheet to know which role you need — or which one fits you

Scrum Master	Project Manager
Serves one team, one product	Oversees scope, budget, timeline, often across teams
Removes blockers, protects the team's focus	Owens delivery, coordinates stakeholders
Guards the Agile process (sprints, ceremonies)	Guards the plan (deadlines, budget, risk)
Coaches the team toward self-organization	Directs and reports on progress upward
Success = a healthy, effective team	Success = project delivered on time & budget

Choose Scrum Master when...

- Your team already knows **what** to build, but struggles with **how** to work together
- You want someone embedded full-time in one product team's day-to-day rhythm
- The priority is team health, velocity, and continuous improvement

Choose Project Manager when...

- You're coordinating multiple teams, vendors, or departments
- There's a hard deadline, fixed budget, or external stakeholder commitments
- Someone needs to own the full delivery timeline end-to-end

Quick self-check: which one are you?

- Do you care more about **team dynamics** or **delivery outcomes**? → Scrum Master / PM
- Do you report to one Product Owner, or to multiple stakeholders? → Scrum Master / PM
- Is your success measured in sprint velocity, or on-time-on-budget delivery? → Scrum Master / PM

Want the full breakdown? Read the complete article on pmwithmizan.com
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