

Inside Academy: Frank Zinner on the Professional Scrum Developer (Java) course

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Inside Academy is a chance for course participants and lecturers to have their say, tell us what they thought of our courses and give us some critical feedback.

The first two interviews were conducted following the July 2013 [Professional Scrum Developer \(Java\)](#) (PSD.Java) course, held in Schlieren. Below, we interview course participant Frank Zinner, a software systems engineer at Nidag GmbH in Mainz.

Frank, what do you do at Nidag GmbH?

I work on a range of mostly web projects, including in an on-site Deutsche Telekom Scrum team. Together with my colleagues, I am responsible for implementing their E-Mail Center product.

Why did you attend the PSD.Java course?

I attended the course for a number of reasons. Firstly, I wanted to expand my knowledge of Scrum and learn more about the inspect and adapt aspect of Scrum. Secondly, I wanted to be able to document this knowledge by obtaining certification.

As I now have more than 18 months experience with Scrum, in early 2013 I decided to obtain certification. The question for me was with which organisation (ScrumAlliance.org or Scrum.org) and which made most sense from my point of view. Scrum Alliance also offers a professional scrum developer course, though it requires you to have previously completed other courses, which for me as a developer in the first instance didn't make a lot of sense. My primary focus was very clearly on development and much less on the roles of scrum master or product owner. For me, Scrum.org certification was therefore the better option, especially as I was planning to pay for the course myself.

What expectations did you have?

My expectations for the course were that it would place my knowledge on a much firmer foundation. I wanted to know more about test-driven development and professional development techniques in particular. Consequently, topics such as testing, clean code, refactoring and continuous integration were important issues, as was sharing ideas and experiences with people with similar problems.

I also wanted to gain an overview of available practice-proven tools and to hear how other

people had got on with them. Broader Scrum issues such as working with multiple Scrum teams on the same products – things like Scrums of Scrums – were also important to me.

Were your expectations met?

My expectations were exceeded. I am very glad that I attended the course and I took many different things away with me. We were a small group, who were easy to work with and we had a very lively exchange of ideas and experiences. We exchanged a few more ideas with our instructor Daniel Tobler over a couple of beers in the evening, for example, where we also met another instructor.

The sprint work in our team involved bringing together some fairly diverse characters, but it was never a problem. All in all, we made a good team and pretty much all of our questions were explored in some detail by our instructor.

To whom would you recommend the course?

Although it was a demanding course, I would recommend it to any developer who is interested in Scrum. It certainly wouldn't do any harm, indeed it's probably quite helpful, to have some previous Scrum experience, otherwise you could find the course a little hard-going – it is very demanding in places. For developers who work or will in future have to work in Scrum teams, it is worth working your way through the Scrum Guide beforehand.

The course is aimed at people who have already spent some time working in Scrum mode, as it focuses quite a lot on Scrum and development practices. There are still some developers who do Scrum but don't apply Extreme Programming techniques and practices. Although these are not strictly required by Scrum, I would strongly recommend them and I think they make a big contribution to successful Scrum project resolution and product development.

Further information on the course:

- [PSD.Java course content and dates](#)
- [Blog: Interview with Ákos Péteri on the PSD.Java course](#)
- [Blog: Combined team building and Scrum training!](#)