How to prepare for PSM1?

Because a scrum certificate is a frequent requirement, it might come in handy when applying for a job. Scrum is a practical method, so studying a lot can be a great waste of time. Besides the cap of 85% does not leave a lot of room for error Therefore this manual will guide you efficiently towards the exam in eight steps.

Step 1: Reading the training manual

The first step is to get a basic understanding of scrum by reading the training manual from management plaza. This is much less technical than the official scrum guide and therefore a good starting point. It provides a good insight in the framework of scrum and more practical than the scrum guide. Beware though, this manual is not accurate on some points. During the exam you have to be very accurate and thus this manual is in no way a good preparation in itself.

Step 2: Read the scrum guide

Now you have some idea about what scrum is and how the framework looks like. This allows you to read the official scrum guide, which is pretty 'technical'. You can download this document in your own language from : http://www.scrumguides.org/ . The document is about 14 pages and regularly updated. It is a good idea to read it first in your native language and after that take the English, since it is leading.

14 pages seems like an easy job, but don't be fooled by the length! It is written very densely, pretty much every sentence is important. This means that just reading it once will not be sufficient for the exam, unless you are blessed (or cursed) with a photographic memory. This scrum guide is leading fort he exam and exists out of the following parts: The **scrum team**, the **events** and **artefacts**. This structure is pretty clear, but it throws its shadow over perhaps a more important part of scrum: the fundament. The fundament of scrum is that the framework is meant as a solution for creating very complex products in uncertain and changing markets. This comes from the theory of empiricism: only what is measured is certain. This is why scrum ignores all that is not known yet, meaning the distant future.

The framework offers a lot of room for adaption as a solution to cope with uncertainties that will come into play. This is the first pillar of scrum: **Adaption**. The second one is **Inspection**, since every event in scrum is an opportunity to inspect. To be able to inspect, **Transparency** is needed. There are various tools available that increase transparency.

If you read the manual, you can go on with step 3.

Step 3: Practice questions 'Scrum Open'

There are a lot of different questions available on the scrum.org website and many of them are similar to the ones on the exam. The first questions that you should practice are the ones from scrum open. These questions will test your basic knowledge of scrum, basically the crammed information. You should repeat this test until you get a certain 100% score within 10 minutes. You can repeat this test a couple of times until you do not see any new questions (this way you make sure that you get at least these questions right on the exam)

The test is found here: https://www.scrum.org/Assessments/Open-Assessments/Scrum-Open-Assessment

These test provides the answers at the end and if the explanation is inadequate, you can always google the question to find an explanation. The scrum.org forum provides many questions and answers from experienced scrummers.

Step 4: Practice 'Scrum practitioner open'

It is time to step it up one notch, with the practitioner open test. This is a much more challenging test, because many questions are not answerable solely from the scrum guide. Here your intelligence comes into play. Furthermore this test is more difficult because i twill not provide you the answers, only the end result. Thankfully many people before you asked the answers tot he questions on the scrum.org forum. This link will direct you to the test, but registration is required.

http://www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/?quiz=dm954ca7177d9655

Because no answers are given, it is difficult to get a 100% score. You can use screenshots for your analysis. Repeat this test around 5 times thoroughly no matter what score you get.

Step 5: Scaled scrum

As you undoubtedly learned by now, is that a lot of questions from the previous test are about scaling scrum. There is a 'hidden' test which provides you these questions and provides explanation afterwards! Just click the following link and take the test a couple of times until you've seen all the questions.

http://www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/?quiz=7rt5464b55300026

Step 6: Burndown charts

In the new scrum guide, the burndown chart has been left out, because it became part of the chapter transparency. But during the exam you will get questions (not really hard ones) about a burndown, so it is important to know something on this topic. The following link will provide you with some information on burndowncharts

http://webgate.ltd.uk/burndown-chart/

Furthermore it is good to know that there are many alternatives available that provide more transparency and might thus be more desirable:
http://www.mountaingoatsoftware.com/agile/scrum/release-burndown/alternative

And the CFD: http://scrumandkanban.co.uk/burndown-versus-cfd/

Step 7: Scrum of scrums

Part of scaled scrum is the scrum of scrums. There are various opinions on this topic, but what is most in line with the guide and also the exam, is that the scrum of scrums is meant as a way to get different development teams, working on the same product, to work in line with each other and to share knowledge. This event is not needed per se and not an official event in the scrum guide. In the exam all answers that mention something about a fixed time or fixed meeting with regards to the scrum of scrums is therefore wrong. Many people for instance argue that it is a scrum of scrum masters, but this is not the case per se. It could be the choice, but getting a representative from each team could just as well be a developer.

In the following link you can see a nice reaction of Jeff Sutherland, founder of Scrum.

http://guide.agilealliance.org/guide/scrumofscrums.html

https://www.scrum.org/Blog/ArtMID/1765/ArticleID/12/Resurrecting-the-Much-Maligned-Scrum-of-Scrums

Step 8: Practice all the tests until you get just one question wrong for each test.

Getting 85% is not easy and every question you can fill in entirely sure, is one mistake less. If you've completed all steps, you are ready to become certified.

Good luck with the exam and Scrum on!