

# Scrum Alliance Certified Team Coach<sup>SM</sup> (CTC) Application — SAMPLE

## Application Instructions

Read the [CTC Application Instructions](#) before filling out this application.

### Application Review Process Overview

The CTC Review Process is a two-part process. Part I must be completed, submitted, and approved before Part II can be started.

#### **Part I: Qualification and Prerequisites**

The first part of the application process evaluates your credentials against the requirements of the program. It focuses on the quantitative measures of your body of work as a coach.

#### **Part II: Coaching Experience, Competencies, Specialties, and Recommendations**

The second part of the application is a qualitative evaluation of your capability as a team coach as shown by the diversity of your coaching experience and your ability to demonstrate proficiency across a wide range of competencies.

### SAMPLE Application

This document is a sample application in PDF form designed to help prospective CTC candidates understand the application and the certification requirements.

**DO NOT FILL OUT THIS SAMPLE APPLICATION.**

### Filling out an Official Application

When you feel you meet the prerequisite qualifications identified in Part I of the application, please pay the \$250 nonrefundable application fee via the following link: <https://www.regonline.com/ctcapplicationfee>.

Once your application fee has been received, Scrum Alliance® will provide you with a link to the CTC application, a shared Google document that contains both application parts.

## Part I: Coaching Background and Credentials

Part I of the CTC application serves as evidence of the prerequisites required for CTC certification. This includes your active CSP certification; team coaching experience; Agile community participation; coaching education and mentorship; and coaching tools, techniques, and approaches. Evidence of each prerequisite is required for qualification.

**PART I MUST BE COMPLETED AND ACCEPTED PRIOR TO COMPLETING PART II.**

### Section I-A: Applicant Information

*Purpose: To introduce yourself as a coach and outline your journey in reaching your current position. Expand the cells as needed. In addition, edit the header of this document to include your name.*

<b>Applicant first and last name</b>	
<b>Applicant email address</b>	
<b>Applicant city, state, country</b>	
<b>Applicant native language</b> This application must be completed in English. Non-native users of English may exceed word count limits by 25%.	
<b>Applicant CSP date</b> Active CSP certificate is required.	

<b>Coaching career overview</b> Write a brief summary of your coaching and Agile development history and how you got where you are today. Include key milestone years. (300 words or fewer)	
<b>Coaching focus</b> Write a brief summary of your professional self today, including your approach to and/or philosophy of coaching. (300 words or fewer)	
<b>Reason for applying</b> Provide your reasons for seeking the CTC certification. (150 words or fewer)	
<b>Coaching goals</b> Besides this CTC Certification, describe your top two personal development goals in coaching. (150 words or fewer)	

## Section I-B: Agile Coaching Experience

**Purpose:** Applying to the CTC program requires demonstration of experience in Agile coaching with an emphasis on Scrum and on work with multiple teams and/or related groups (e.g., team and program or multiple team coordination). Qualification requires a minimum of 1,000 hours of coaching experience over the past two (2) years with at least two organizations, departments, or programs. Additional hours, diversity, and sustained client relationships can be listed to demonstrate breadth and depth of experience.

**Note on estimating coaching hours:** Only hours practicing the coaching and mentoring role are to be calculated in this time (this does not include training, managing, developing, serving as a ScrumMaster or project manager, etc.). See Definition of Agile Coaching in the CTC Application Instructions Document.

- **For external coaching consultants,** calculate hours of consulting services provided to your clients. If hourly coaching data is not available, use average hours per day multiplied by number of days.
- **For internal coach employees,** whether dedicated to Agile coaching or sharing another role in the organization, use the total number of hours actively engaged with the organization in an Agile coaching capacity. Calculate this as a percentage of your job responsibilities serving in the Agile coaching role.

**Note on organization names:** If you are contractually restricted from listing the name of your client(s), just provide a brief descriptive term, such as Large Financial Client, Stealth Start-Up, Government Agency, etc. If the reviewers desire validation of experience, they will contact you directly for more information without violating privacy.

### Agile Coaching Experience

Provide a summary list of brief descriptions of your Agile coaching engagements, the total representing a minimum of 2 years and 1,000 hours. Additional experience from up to 5 years prior may be included for additional perspective of your coaching experience. For each engagement, fill out a row in the table below. For coaches who work within large companies, consider multiple divisions, business units, or other company substructures as separate organizations (and thus as separate rows in the table). Add more rows to the table as needed.

Date range (List most recent first.)	Estimated coaching hours	Number of teams coached	Organization name <i>Write a brief description of your coaching focus within this organization.</i> (Each description cell is limited to 100 words or fewer.)
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>			<b>A minimum of 1,000 hours within the past 2 years is required.</b>

## Section I-C: Coaching Education and Mentorship

**Purpose:** Applying to the CTC program requires demonstration of a journey of learning through education, mentorship, and collaboration in coaching and related activities over a minimum of two (2) years.

*There is not a specific number of education and mentorship activities required for acceptance. Rather, you must demonstrate an active learning journey taken within the past three (3) to five (5) years.*

### **Formal Coaching Education**

List up to ten (10) formal education activities that have contributed significantly to your coaching journey. This includes a wide range of courses and workshops on topics including facilitation, leadership, consulting, coaching, process, tools, techniques, frameworks, and other related activities that have influenced your coaching practice. Formal education counts, whether or not it was related to a degree. Your list may include training and/or certification from any recognized institution. For partial or full degrees, provide a summary. Add more rows to the table as needed, up to your top ten (10) experiences.

<b>Education date range</b> (List most recent first.)	<b>Education title, trainer, description, and impact on your coaching</b> (Each row response is limited to 100 words or fewer.)

### **Coaching Mentorship and Collaboration**

List your coach mentorship and significant collaboration activities in which you DEVELOPED a skill or technique or RECEIVED guidance for your coaching approach and mindset. Mentors do not need to be Scrum Alliance Certified Enterprise Coaches (CECs) or CSTs; they may be any respected and experienced leader from whom you have gained significant learning. Co-training with a CEC, CST, or other Agile trainer also qualifies if it has impacted your coaching. Add more rows to the table as needed, up to seven (7).

<b>Mentor or collaboration date range</b> (List most recent first.)	<b>Mentor/collaborator name, focus, intensity, and impact on your coaching</b> (Each row response is limited to 100 words or fewer.)

**Informal Coaching Learning**

List three (3) significant books or topics you have studied that have impacted your coaching approach or philosophy. Summarize the impact each has had on your coaching.

Book title/ author OR topic of study	Summarize the impact of this book or topic on your coaching approach or philosophy. (Each row response is limited to 200 words or fewer.)
1.	
2.	
3.	

**Section I-D: Agile Community Engagement**

***Purpose:** Applying to the CTC program requires demonstration of active engagement with AND contribution to the Agile community over a minimum of two (2) years. Participation includes engagement in Agile user groups, gatherings, retreats, camps, and conferences. Contribution includes writing, publishing, reviewing, presenting, facilitating, training, mentoring, organizing, and leading Agile events (e.g., user groups, gatherings, sessions, retreats, camps, clinics, and conferences). Diversity in global and local engagement, as well as a diversity of responsibilities, is recognized.*

*There is not a specific number of activities required for acceptance. Rather, you must demonstrate active participation and leadership across all categories within the last three (3) to five (5) years. Future events may also be listed if you are registered to attend, selected to speak or publish, or will assist in leadership of the event.*

**Agile Community Participation**

List up to twelve (12) Agile community events (user groups, gatherings, retreats, camps, conferences, etc.) you have attended that were most meaningful to you. For each, describe your involvement and any contributions you made that provided value to the Agile community (presentations, facilitation, writing). Place emphasis on events to which you made a contribution. Add more rows to the table as needed, up to 12 total.

Agile event date (List most recent first.)	Agile event and your involvement or contribution (Each row response is limited to 50 words or fewer.)

### Section I-E: Coaching Tools, Techniques, and Frameworks

**Purpose:** Applying to the CTC program requires the awareness, understanding, implementation, and development of tools, techniques, and frameworks while engaged with organizations. Coaching tools, techniques, and frameworks may include assessments, surveys, retrospective or review techniques, build/integrate/deploy systems, Lean tools and techniques, scaling frameworks, metrics, organizational or leadership models, etc.

#### Coaching Tools, Techniques, or Frameworks

List five (5) coaching tools, techniques, or frameworks that you have used in one or more client engagements. Each of the five examples must apply to a different organizational focus (identified by row, plus one of your choosing). Choose one (1) tool per row. Please provide the details requested regarding amount of experience and reasons for using that tool.

Focus	Tool, technique, or framework	Brief description of one tool, technique, or framework per row. How much have you used the tool, technique, or framework? Why do you leverage the tool, technique, or framework in your coaching? (Each row response is limited to 100 words or fewer.)
Team maturation		
Large-group facilitation		
Multi-team coordination		
Multi-team release management		
Other (your choice)		

### Section I-F: Additional Perspective and Feedback

**Purpose:** To provide a free-form opportunity to share any additional dimensions of your coaching journey (learning, experience, or community involvement) you feel would be important for the review team to understand.

#### Additional Coaching Perspective

If you feel that the space above did not provide you an opportunity to demonstrate a dimension of yourself that would be important to share, use the space below to include it. Expand the space as needed.

### Section I-G: Application Process Feedback

**Purpose:** To help us improve this application and review process.

#### CTC Application - Part I Feedback

If you were to add, change, or remove one question in Part I, what would it be and why?  
(Response is limited to 100 words.)

#### CTC Application - Part I Process Feedback

Please provide your suggestions for improving the CTC Part I application process.  
(Response is limited to 100 words.)

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**THIS IS THE END OF THE CTC APPLICATION – PART I. DO NOT CONTINUE WITH PART II UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN APPROVED TO DO SO.**

When you have completed Part I of the application, send an email to [teamcoach@scrumalliance.org](mailto:teamcoach@scrumalliance.org) for review and acceptance of meeting the prerequisites.

## Part II: Agile Team Coaching Knowledge and Competencies

The second part of the CTC Application is a qualitative evaluation of your capability as a coach of multiple teams as shown by your experience and ability to demonstrate proficiency across a set of required competencies. It evaluates your knowledge, mindset, and approach as a coach across diverse experiences.

**DO NOT FILL IN PART II OF THE APPLICATION UNTIL PART I HAS BEEN APPROVED.**

### Summary

There are four sections in Part II of the CTC Application. Each section carries equal weight, representing roughly 25% of your overall assessment as a Certified Team Coach. Applicants must demonstrate proficiency in each section to receive certification. Applicants are measured on their understanding, articulation, and application of the skill or competency through an effective coaching mindset and approach. Thus it is not enough that you have experience in the skill or competency; you must also demonstrate an appropriate coaching thought and execution process in seeing it through.

#### Section II-A: Agile Knowledge

**Purpose:** Agile coaches must demonstrate a solid understanding of the principles and practices of Scrum and related Agile frameworks. CTCs are required to demonstrate this knowledge and the ability to clearly explain concepts to others through a series of specific questions.

#### Section II-B: Coaching Competencies

**Purpose:** Agile coaches are Agile practitioners and guides to their client organizations in educating, facilitating, and coaching growth in Agile capabilities. CTCs are required to demonstrate proficiency in five (5) coaching competency areas. The Coaching Competencies are further detailed in Section II-B.

#### Section II-C: Coaching Mindset

**Purpose:** To provide evidence of your ability to apply your Agile knowledge and coaching skills to a new situation. For each of two hypothetical scenarios, you will respond to each of the targeted questions that follow.

#### Section II-D: Client and Mentor Coaching Recommendations

**Purpose:** To provide evidence of your coaching proficiency and competencies in the organizations where you have coached. Applying to the CTC program requires three (3) recommendations as follows: two (2) client, project leader, or organization leader recommendations and one (1) mentor recommendation. A mentor recommendation is from someone who has provided learning and supported growth in your coaching journey. Recommendations that represent substantial and diverse coaching and mentorship engagements are recognized.

Guidelines for mentor recommendations can be found [here](#).

Guidelines for client recommendations can be found [here](#).



## Section II-A: Agile Knowledge

**Purpose:** To demonstrate your knowledge of principles and practices of Scrum and related frameworks and your ability to clearly explain these to others. The following questions cover a limited range of knowledge areas related to Agile. Respond to each of the following questions with clear and concise answers.

### Agile Knowledge 1: Frameworks

Describe a situation in which you might advise a client to apply XP, Lean, or a non-Agile approach to work flow instead of Scrum. Describe the reasoning behind your advice. If you have ever done this or considered doing this, describe the circumstance and outcome.

(Response is limited to 600 words or fewer.)

### Agile Knowledge 2: Feedback Loops

Identify three types of feedback that exist in a Scrum environment. For one of those types of feedback, discuss its value, who benefits from the feedback, and how they benefit. For that type, describe how this feedback also might be misused or lead to negative results.

(Response is limited to 600 words or fewer.)

### Agile Knowledge 3: Team Challenges

Identify two team formation and development challenges commonly encountered while introducing Scrum. For each, describe a coaching approach to address the challenge.

(Response is limited to 600 words or fewer.)

### Agile Knowledge 4: Organizational Enablers

Identify three factors to introduce and cultivate in an organization (business unit, department, program) that can promote improvement in agility and value delivery. Some examples are collaboration tools, technical practices, and structural changes. For each, describe how it can enable and enhance agility and success.

(Response is limited to 600 words or fewer.)

**Agile Knowledge 5: Coaching Perception**

Identify three indicators of suboptimal performance or dysfunction that might appear in a Daily Scrum. What are some approaches a coach could take to address them?

(Response is limited to 600 words or fewer.)

**Agile Knowledge 6: Agile Principles**

Describe an experience in which there is no obvious resolution to an impediment, requiring you to leverage Agile/Scrum values or principles to help your teams or organization identify possible solutions. Which principle(s) are helpful? How did you facilitate the discovery? What was the outcome?

(Response is limited to 600 words or fewer.)

**Agile Knowledge 7: Scrum Scaling**

Describe an experience with coordinating the work of multiple Scrum teams in an organization. Did you apply a particular framework? If so, what were the factors influencing your choice? What challenges did you encounter?

(Response is limited to 600 words or fewer.)

## Section II-B: Coaching Competencies

**Purpose:** Successful Agile coaches are more than experts in Agile practices. Additional coaching skills are required for individual and team success. CTCs are required to demonstrate coaching proficiency across the five (5) core Agile Coaching Competencies listed below.

Core Agile Coaching Competencies
1. <b>Facilitate</b> - Focus and Alignment
2. <b>Educate</b> - Awareness and Understanding
3. <b>Balance</b> - Coaching and Consulting
4. <b>Assess</b> - Discovery and Direction
5. <b>Catalyze</b> - Leadership and Organizations

The following five (5) core Agile Coaching Competencies are evaluated in this application through questions on the following page.

### Coaching Competency 1: Facilitate - Focus and Alignment

Agile coaches facilitate client Agile adoption, implementation, and alignment. They engage teams and stakeholders in focused, pivotal conversations and alignment-building activities. They maintain unbiased views and leverage collaboration and consensus strategies to identify creative opportunities. Examples: multi-team release planning, release retrospectives, portfolio prioritization workshops with multiple stakeholders.

### Coaching Competency 2: Educate - Awareness and Understanding

Agile coaches guide the client's Agile learning through education and discovery. They focus on stabilizing principles and varying practices to situationally align the client's maturity with effective application of agility. They are mentors and leaders in developing client understanding and awareness of agility. Examples: Lean/Agile/Scrum training classes, targeted team practice training, ScrumMaster and product owner training and mentoring, Agile technical practices training.

### Coaching Competency 3: Balance - Coaching and Consulting

Agile coaches balance their own Agile expertise with their teams' needs and goals. They use coaching tools such as questioning, role modeling, sharing their expertise, and guiding teams' self-discovery. Examples: prescribed solutions vs. guided discovery of solutions, leading questions vs. powerful questions, standardized methods vs. tailored methods.

### Coaching Competency 4: Assess - Discovery and Direction

Agile coaches act as a mirror to their teams, helping them surface the underlying systems that influence them. This enables them to reflect on possible ways to increase agility and improve performance. They can help teams see below the surface, expose challenging symptoms, and isolate root causes. Examples: assessing teams' scope of influence, application of empowering discovery techniques, alternative ways to uncover the teams' impediments.

### Coaching Competency 5: Catalyze - Leadership and Organizations

Agile coaches are change agents for their teams. They engage with the whole organizational system and the leaders who guide them. They enhance teams' existing skills and capabilities. They connect interdependencies and impact teams' reflection, learning, and growth. Examples: leading by example, sharing personal learnings from experience, enhancing visibility of progress toward agility.

**Coaching Competency 1: Facilitate**

List three (3) facilitation tools that you use to help teams and other organization members discover opportunities for improvement. Emphasize large-group facilitation experiences. For each, describe a situation in which you used it effectively or in which it did not achieve the desired results.

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Coaching Competency 2: Educate**

Describe your strategy for guiding and growing teams to increased agility through training and reinforced learning. How did you develop that strategy? What techniques do you use to deliver and assess the effectiveness of your educational efforts? Describe a specific multi-team, program, or department example.

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Coaching Competency 3: Balance**

In your own words, briefly explain the difference between coaching and consulting. Describe how you developed your competency to balance coaching and consulting. Describe an experience in which you felt “out of balance.” How has your approach changed because of this experience?

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Coaching Competency 4: Assess**

Share your strategy for assessing a group’s readiness in order to guide your choice of coaching strategy before you engage in a multi-team situation. Why would you choose that assessment method? Share a specific client example illustrating why you applied the method and how it informed your strategy.

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Coaching Competency 5: Catalyze**

Describe your general approach toward catalyzing teams’ changes toward greater agility. Describe three (3) key leverage points you focus on through your coaching. Explain why you choose these.

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

## Section II-C: Coaching Mindset

**Purpose:** To provide evidence of your ability to apply your Agile knowledge and coaching skills to a new situation. For BOTH of the following hypothetical scenarios, respond to each of the targeted questions that follow. For each question, provide a clear and concise response.

### Scenario # 1: Scrum Team Tune-up

The founding member of an Agile team has expressed concern that the team has not internalized the Agile philosophy, despite using the Scrum format for almost a year. One particular problem has been identified: The team consistently falls short of its sprint goal and carries work forward. In addition, the team — which has not had any formal training or coaching — questions the benefits of the Agile process. You are invited to attend a week of daily stand-up meetings to help diagnose issues and suggest improvements.

The daily meeting takes about 30 minutes and includes 20 people in dispersed locations. They converse via a telephone conference line. It appears that all eyes are focused on a time-tracking tool that includes burn-up and burn-down charts. Two voices dominate the call: those of the project manager and the Agile founder. Each team member answers the question: “What did you work on since the last meeting?” This information may or may not have been entered into the tracking tool. If not, the leaders remind the team members that they must do this. The leaders also quiz each member on how their time was spent; whether the work is fitting into the estimate; and if not, why not. There is little talking between team members on the call.

The Agile founder is a senior technical leader who has introduced Scrum and serves as the ScrumMaster part-time. The project manager is responsible for completion of the project by a published deadline.

**Question 1.1.** What techniques would you use to assess the opportunities and challenges in this scenario? (Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Question 1.2.** What would your strategy be for coaching the team members toward improvement? (Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Question 1.3.** What coaching challenges would you anticipate and how would you manage them? (Response is limited to 600 words.)

## Scenario # 2: Introducing Scrum to a Multi-team Distributed Project

A team of 40 people has been assembled for a project to complete a major revision to a large back-end system. The team has been divided into five sub-teams. Each team consists of a few employees in one office in the United States and a few contractors in another office in Asia. The project manager wants to adopt Scrum with Agile engineering techniques. The project manager has chosen a six-week sprint length to allow sufficient time for integration testing of interteam dependencies. The teams will transition to Scrum one at a time. Two teams have completed three sprints with no formal training. The project manager defines the backlog for each team and establishes high-level story estimates. Technical leads on the two Scrum teams have been making the task breakdowns and estimates.

You have been invited to help coach this team. The team has expressed some uncertainties in applying the Scrum model:

- The system has no user interface. It only interacts with a few upstream systems and a large number of downstream systems. The team is having some trouble defining the backlog and planning the client demonstration.
- The system cannot be deployed in increments. The plan is for a one-time cutover for all of the downstream systems. The team is questioning the appropriateness of the Scrum model of iterative development with frequent deliveries.
- The ScrumMaster is concerned that the client and area manager expect a commitment from the team that the work will be completed by the cutover deadline that has already been announced.

**Question 2.1.** What are some potential technical and process impediments in this scenario? How would you lead the teams and managers to discover and mitigate these challenges?

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Question 2.2.** How would you address the team members' concerns about using Scrum? What coaching techniques do you think would be effective and why?

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

**Question 2.3.** What strategy would you use to coach the project leaders toward success in achieving their stated goals? Explain your reasons for choosing that strategy.

(Response is limited to 600 words.)

## Section II-D: Agile Coaching Recommendations

**Purpose:** To provide evidence of your proficiency in your coaching experience and competencies in the organizations where you have coached. Applying to the CTC program requires three (3) recommendations. You are required to have two (2) client, project leader, or organization leader recommendations and one (1) mentor recommendation. A mentor recommendation is from someone who has helped you learn and grow in your coaching journey. Recommendations that represent more substantial and diverse coaching and mentorship engagements are recognized.

The people recommending you must mail the recommendations directly to [teamcoach@scrumalliance.org](mailto:teamcoach@scrumalliance.org). The recommendation may be written directly in the email or included as a document (Word or pdf) attached to the email. Recommendations sent by the applicant will not be accepted. The CTC Applicant and the recommendation provider will each receive a confirmation email from Scrum Alliance upon receipt of the recommendation.

Guidelines for mentor recommendations can be found [here](#).

Guidelines for client recommendations can be found [here](#).

If your reference requires anonymity, list their job title or other identifier in place of their name. In this case you may send their reference letter yourself for privacy. If the reviewers desire validation of experience, they will contact you directly for more information without violating privacy.

CTC Applicants who submitted references in prior application attempts are allowed to resubmit those recommendations directly to avoid having to ask the recommendation provider for another recommendation.

### Coaching Recommendations

Name of reference	Job title or position	Date range of client engagement/employment	Client/employer organization and coaching focus

### Mentor Recommendation

Name of mentor reference	Company	Date range of mentorship	Focus of mentoring

## Section II-E: Additional Perspective and Feedback

**Purpose:** To provide a free-form opportunity to share any additional dimensions of your coaching journey (learning, experience, or community involvement) that you feel would be important for the review team to understand. These items are not required.

### Additional Coaching Perspectives

If you feel that the space above (in Part II) did not provide you an opportunity to demonstrate a dimension of yourself that would be important to share and would be relevant to teams coaching, please use the space below to include it. Expand the space as needed.

### CTC Application and Process Feedback

If you have any feedback about Part II of this application, or about the CTC application process or the way you have been supported through it, please include it below. Expand the space as needed.

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**THIS IS THE END OF THE CTC APPLICATION PART II.**

When you have completed Part II of the application, send an email to [teamcoach@scrumalliance.org](mailto:teamcoach@scrumalliance.org). You will be notified regarding your client recommendations if any are still outstanding.