AI-Powered Backlog Management

1 day · approx. 8 hours | Applied workshop | English | Live virtual or onsite

From requirements to a refined backlog in Azure DevOps

Turn unclear business requirements into clear, testable work items that truly describe your intent. Learn how to use AI to clarify scope, strengthen acceptance criteria, and improve requirement readiness. Experience how you can spend more time clarifying requirements and less time updating backlog items. Build a shared, repeatable AI-powered approach to backlog management by leveraging custom Agent Skills, GitHub Copilot, and the Azure DevOps MCP Server in repeatable workflows where humans review proposals and approve work item changes before publishing.

Leveraging Agent Skills

Agent Skills capture expert knowledge, team standards, quality checks, and review steps in reusable instructions for AI agents. They help your team to effectively move from isolated AI prompts toward reusable, governed AI-assisted delivery workflows. Teams create, maintain, and improve the skills as shared assets, so agreed practices and improvements are available and consistently applied across the team. Agent Skills guide GitHub Copilot through structured, repeatable workflows where humans steer and review AI proposals before approving changes.

Who should attend

Product Owners, Business Analysts, Product Managers, QA and Developers involved in backlog work. Engineering Managers, Delivery Leads, Scrum Masters and Agile Coaches can also attend.

What participants will learn using custom agent skills

- **Improve work-item readiness** and **reduce manual backlog management effort**.
- Share expert knowledge and apply team standards, review steps and approval gates.
- Create and publish an approved Epic → Feature → PBI hierarchy from a specification document.
- Retrieve and refine work items and acceptance criteria using live Azure DevOps backlog context.
- Explore options for clarifying scope and splitting oversized backlog items.
- Check related work items for consistency and assess them against agreed readiness criteria.
- Review AI proposals, request changes and approve updates before publication.

Course outline

- Custom skills as shared team assets: expert knowledge, team standards and continuous improvement
- Copilot/MCP and live context
- Backlog generation and publishing approved changes
- Work item refinement
- Additional refinement options

Practical work and outputs

Guided labs take about half the day. In an isolated Azure DevOps project, participants create and publish a linked backlog hierarchy, refine existing items and review proposed updates. Outputs include clearer work items and acceptance criteria, recorded decisions and open questions.

Lab environment and materials

Prepared browser lab with GitHub Copilot and Azure DevOps, Agilist Agent Skills, guided exercises, learning materials and practical references.

Agent Skills: Agilist develops and maintains these skills. Participants receive them for use under a license.

Toolset: GitHub Copilot · Azure DevOps MCP Server · Agilist Agent Skills · VS Code in GitHub Codespaces

Prerequisites

Basic familiarity with backlog items and refinement. No previous Azure DevOps, Agent Skills or GitHub Copilot experience is required. You need a laptop with internet access. No local installation is needed.

How Agilist's workshops fit together

Agilist's AI training portfolio includes focused, hands-on workshops that can be taken independently or combined into a connected learning journey. Learn more on the AI-Powered Backlog Management training page. Continue the journey with the complementary AI-Powered Behavior-Driven Development workshop, which turns refined backlog items into executable specifications, automated tests, and living documentation. Download its course overview (PDF).