Part 2: Collaboration

Presented by: Scott Duncan

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Logistics

- Attendees are on mute

- Type your comments & questions into the Question area – Scott will answer questions during and at the end of the webinar

Logistics

- You will receive an email tomorrow:

  - Which is verification of attendance for RUs, PUs, etc.

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Presenter: Scott Duncan

Scott has worked in software since 1972 as a developer, technology transfer researcher, process consultant & trainer in domains such as:
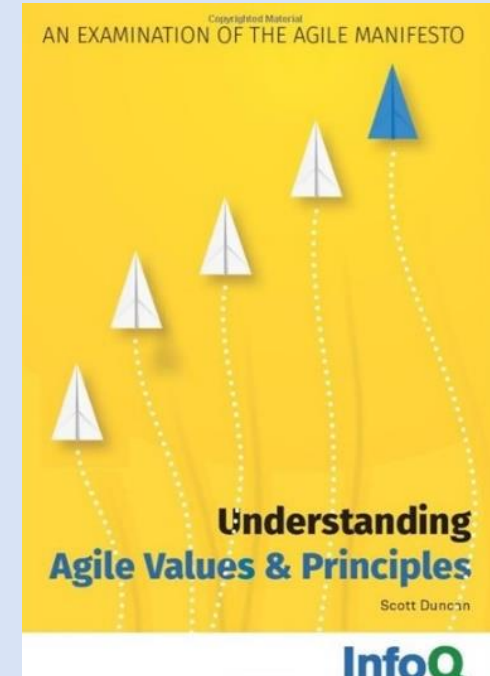
- Book distribution

- Law & public safety

- Mainframe database & natural language query products

- Credit card transaction processing

- Telecommunications (14+ years in Bell Labs, Bellcore, & Telcordia)

Scott has also been a(n):

- Internal ISO 9001 Auditor & CMM assessor

- Member of ISO & IEEE Standards Committees

Since 2004, Scott has been working in various Agile contexts:

- Coaching & training with Scrum, XP and Lean/Kanban (including 2 years on Scrum Alliance Board of Directors)

- Recent full-time coaching work for a company that created software for the design, construction, & operation of "big things" as the enterprise coach for 144 Scrum teams in the US, India, Israel, UK, Germany, France, and Canada.

- Currently independently coaching and training

AN EXAMINATION OF THE AGILE MANIFESTO

Understanding Agile Values & Principles

Scott Duncan

InfoQ

Agenda/Topics

C, C and T

Collaboration

Collaboration "Rhythm"

Supporting Collaboration

Silo Impediments

What Can Be Done

Communication Collaboration & Trust

- Effective communication involves how clearly and easily information is shared between team members, teams, managers, stakeholders.

- Effective collaboration involves how easily and willingly people share work together rather than just getting "their own work" done.

- Trust is the "state of readiness for *unguarded* interaction with someone or something."

All of these must work for any one to work.

Collaboration

- Derives from the Latin word *collaborare* which means 'to work together'.
- Doesn't "cooperation" mean the same thing?
  - The "co" prefix does mean together.
  - But to "operate" together, people may simply pursue their work without impeding others.
  - To "labor" together suggests sharing concern for all the work, not just doing one's own part of it.
- Ron Jeffries has noted that "Much productivity improvement comes from the synergy of working together effectively."
  - "Build a true team, not just a work group assigned to a project."
  - "Support each other. Help each other grow."
  - "Leave no team member behind. Solve problems together."
  - "Respect each other. Respect the differences, the special abilities, the varying perspectives."
- Alistair Cockburn, however, has noted that "you [may] know how to collaborate, but you may not want to."

Collaboration "Rhythm"

- When organizations struggle, we often hear "Let's collaborate more," but more collaboration time may not always be the answer.
  - Understand what drives the need for handovers and blocking dependencies.

- Remote people must be involved in as many decisions as possible.
- Have a "Rhythm of Results" that defines daily, weekly, and monthly delivery (though the team ships every 2 weeks)
  - It creates a bias for action.
- And a "Rhythm of Reflection"
  - Monday - vision, Daily - outcomes, Friday – learning

Supporting Collaboration

Alistair Cockburn wrote "Collaboration: the dance of contribution" (2007) and said:

- Lift others - "Recognize others. … Ask for their thoughts."
  - "…[ask] a question that shows that you have understood what they said and are taking it to a new level."
- Increase safety - "Donate [your ideas so] people feel safer in offering up their own."
  - "Widen the boundary [by saying] something outside the expected"
- Make progress - "Try to make sure that your first speaking contributes something of value."
  - "Clarify the way forward … illustrat[ing] either what has been achieved, where the group is, or even better, show what the way forward looks like."
- Add energy - "Contribut[e] your own ideas [because if] everyone only sits and listens, the group will wind down."
  - "Challenge others' ideas, not to put them down, but to explore the truth and the limits of the idea [as this is] part of helping to make progress, part of listening intently."

Silos - Impediments to Collaboration

Organizational silos started with Frederick Winslow Taylor in *The Principles of Scientific Management* where he advocated splitting mental and physical work.

- Sometimes such specialization seems to make sense:
  - There are too few people with the skills or knowledge to spread across all teams.
    - ✓ This can lead to problems in coordinating dependencies between groups.
  - Time zones make collaboration challenging, work gets divided.

    - ✓ This may prevent communication and collaboration leading to more documentation.

- Dependencies dilute a team's control over their own work and progress.

  - One of the main wastes waiting, which interrupts successful flow of work.

- Turf boundaries discourage shared accountability and ownership.

  - Siloed groups are likely to optimize their behavior in ways that impede the work of others suboptimizing the overall organizational workflow.

What Can Be Done?

- Collaboration experience is not automatically shared in teams.
  - Pay attention to offloading work if demands increase disproportionally.
- Ensure that demands focus on value-added work.
  - Push decision-making lower so teams can make decisions.
- At QCon New York 2023 Emily Webber identified these patterns:
  - Limited Role Availability – a specialist must work across multiple teams but cannot attend all key meetings and wastes time context switching.
  - We vs They Distance – communication occurs hierarchically between "business" and "technical," creating less effective communication.
  - Single Aspect Focus – where work driven by creating product(s) and "shipping" them matters more than how well they meet the desired outcome, putting distance between teams.

Collaboration Explained by Jean Tabaka

Questions?
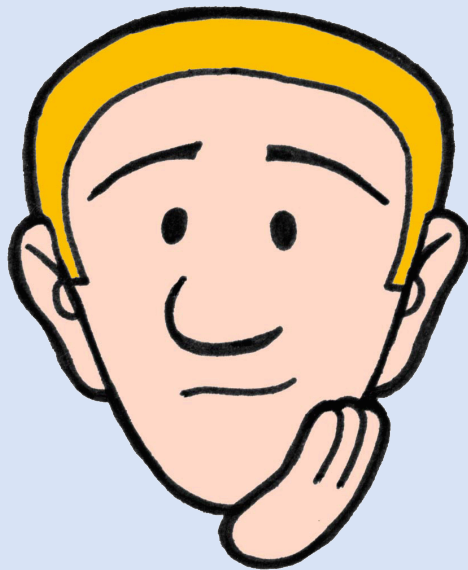
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Upcoming Webinars

January 2024 topic: Communications, Collaboration & Trust

- Monday, 1/22/2024 – Part 3: Trust presented by Scott Duncan

Scott Duncan is doing a webinar on each of these topics – please submit your questions on any or all of these topics to sduncan@westfallteam.com

February 2024 topic: Agile

- Monday, 2/5/2024 – Agile Agita, Go Beyond Collaborating on Faster Horses presented by Robin Goldsmith

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