

Introduction

Lesson Introduction

Lesson Overview



- High Performing Teams
- Size, Structure and Skills
- Agile Governance

Learning Objectives

By the End of the Lesson You Will Be Able To...

- Differentiate the 3 core roles (**Product Owner, Facilitator and Team Member**).
- Identify the characteristics of a **high-performing team**
- Identify and implement the approaches for **high performing team development and management**
- Implement methods for **conflict resolution** & psychological safety.

Learning Objectives

By the End of the Lesson You Will Be Able To...

- Apply Agile principles to create teams with **optimal size and structure**.
- Develop effective **cross-functional skills** in a team.
- Use best practices to manage and work with **remote teams**
- Apply governance to enable **collaboration** and **decentralized decision making**

Welcome to a lesson on Agile Teams. In the last lesson, we talked about the importance of Agile.

This lesson will cover the following key topics:

High Performing Agile Teams

- How Agile Teams are the vehicle that delivers valuable work tied to business-driven product features and functionality.
- Characteristics of a high-performing Agile Team.
- How to sustain High Performing Teams.

Size, Structure, and Skills of an Agile Team

- The 3 core roles in Agile.
- An Agile Team's optimal size, structure, and cross-functional skills.

Agile Governance

- Agile Governance and how Agile governance leverages The Agile Manifesto's guidelines to balance assurance with adaptability.

By the End of the Lesson, You Will Be Able To...

- Differentiate the 3 core roles (Product Owner, Facilitator, and Team Member)
- Identify the characteristics of a high-performing team

- Identify and implement the approaches for high performing team development and management
- Implement methods for conflict resolution & psychological safety
- Apply Agile principles to create teams with optimal size and structure
- Develop effective cross-functional skills in a team
- Use best practices to manage and work with remote teams
- Apply governance to enable collaboration and decentralized decision making



Lesson Overview - Agile Teams

Why Agile Teams?

Why Do Agile Teams Matter?

Why Agile Teams?

Why Agile Teams?

Focus on Value



Focus on Value

- Business Value remains focus
- Aligns with organization's vision



Why Agile Teams?

Focus on Value



Self-Organized
Teams



Self-Organized

- Team Buy-in
- Shared Ownership
- Motivation



Why Agile Teams?

Focus on Value



Self-Organized Teams



Constructive Conflict Resolution



Constructive Conflict Resolution

- Driven by shared vision
- Focus on the team, not tasks
- Transparently yet respectful



Why Agile Teams?

Focus on Value



Self-Organized Teams



Constructive Conflict Resolution



Innovation Hub



Innovation Hub

- Solutions for new requirements
- Diverse viewpoints
- Innovative solution options



Why Agile Teams?

Focus on Value



Self-Organized Teams



Constructive Conflict Resolution



Innovation Hub



Cultivate Mastery



Cultivate Mastery

- Time is put aside for learning and growth
- Continual improvement is built-in alongside built-in quality



Focus on Value



Self-Organized Teams



Constructive Conflict Resolution



Innovation Hub



Cultivate Mastery



Benefits of Agile Teams

Agile Teams are a critical vehicle to deliver valuable results because of the following:

- **Focus on Value** - Agile is driven by the goal of delivering maximum business value that is aligned with the organization's vision.
- **Self-Organized Teams** - Agile Teams have the autonomy to make some de-centralized decisions, which allows for shared ownership of the work.

- **Constructive Conflict Resolution** - Conflicts in Agile Teams are constructively resolved because the team is driven by a shared vision.
- **Innovation Hub** - Agile Teams, with diverse and cross-functional skill sets, are an innovation hub that spurs solutions.
- **Cultivate Mastery** - Time is put aside in Agile Teams for learning and growth. This allows Agile Team members to sharpen their skills.

Quiz Question

TRUE or FALSE: Small, independent teams are recommended in an Agile organization.

TRUE



FALSE

Submit



Thanks for completing that!

Exactly! These teams are the organizational units through which Agile, product-based work is accomplished.

Continue

Quiz Question

Why must organizations move away from command-and-control behaviors and structures? (There is more than one correct answer)

Command-and-Control structures are ill-suited to today's rapid digital world ✓

Agile enables executives to step back and oversee work with a light but consistent touch ✓

Agile guarantees cheaper delivery of results

Teams excel when they are directed to the best opportunities and armed with the best people ✓

Submit



X

Thanks for completing that!

Absolutely! Senior executives must move their organizations away from outmoded command-and-control behaviors and structures. They must overcome resource inertia and break down silos, because independent teams can't overcome these bureaucratic challenges on their own. They must direct teams to the best opportunities, arm them with the best people, and oversee their work with a light but consistent touch.

Continue

New Terms

- **Innovation Hub:** Proactively working towards continual improvement with no compromise on technical excellence and quality
- **Self-Organized:** The team determines tasks and makes technical decisions about the work to be done after being given priorities by the Product Owner

Additional Resources

- [**5 Ways to Organize Agile Teams**](#): This blog post from the Scrum Alliance describes five techniques to organize Agile teams successfully.

How Experts Approach Agile Teams

Thinking About Agile Teams

How Experts Approach Agile Teams

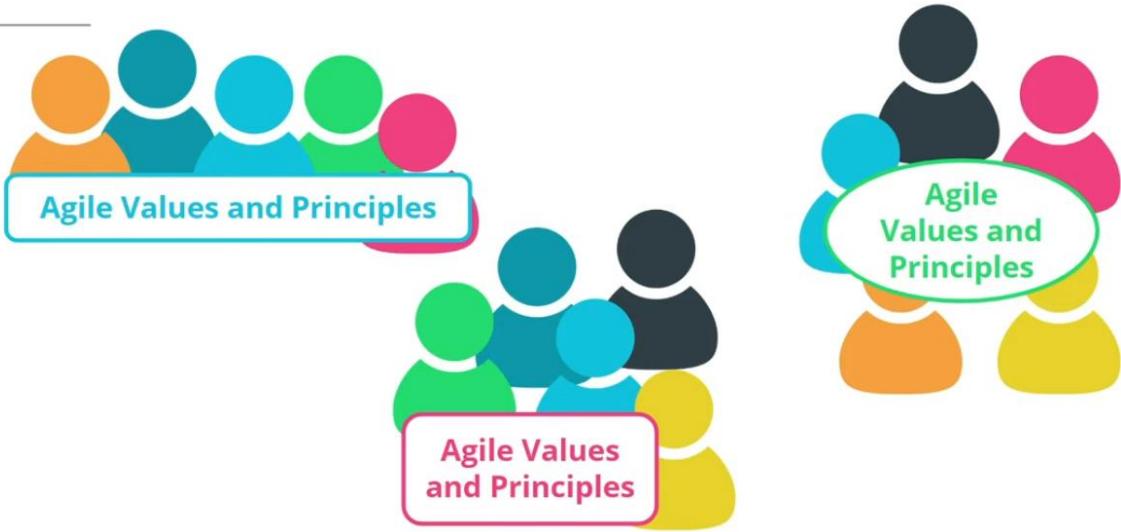
Teamwork is Agile's Secret Sauce



Teamwork is Agile's Secret Sauce



Teamwork is Agile's Secret Sauce

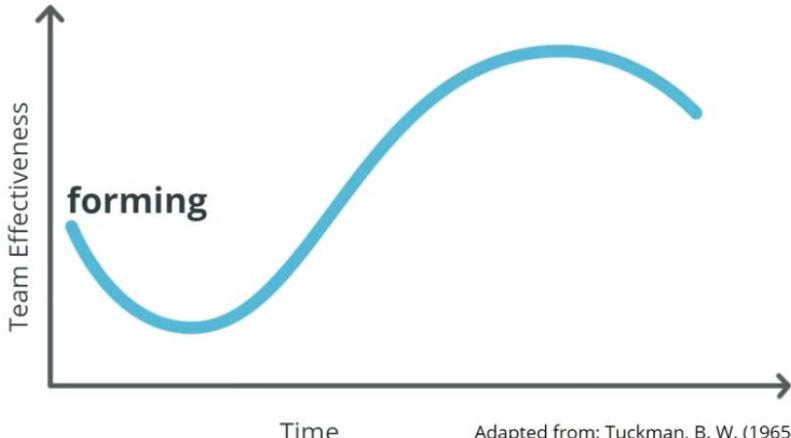


Give it Time



- Agile Teams need time to become awesome
- Patient guidance

Tuckman Model

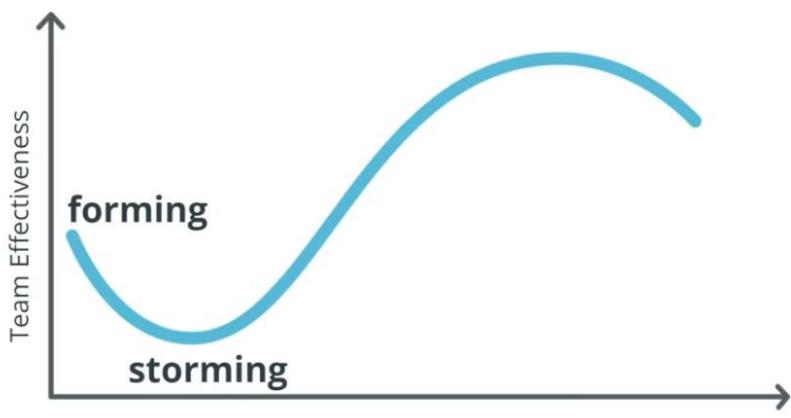


Forming

- Team comes together
- Facilitator explains the ground rules, product vision and expected outcomes

Adapted from: Tuckman, B. W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), 384-399.

Tuckman Model

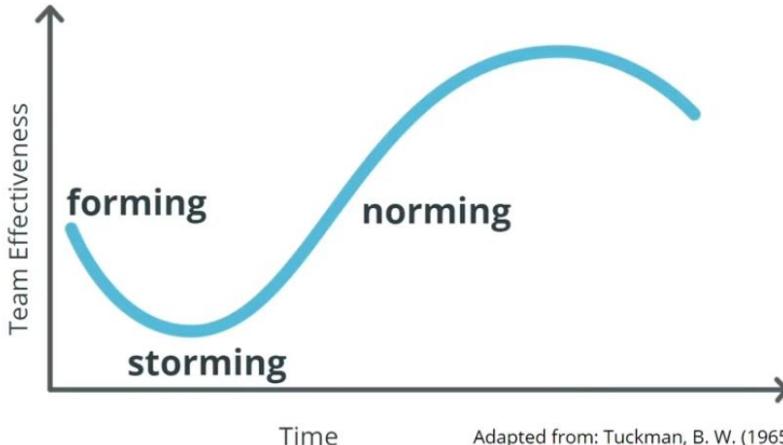


Storming

- Velocity is diminished
- Ambiguity work, roles and product questions

Adapted from: Tuckman, B. W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), 384-399.

Tuckman Model

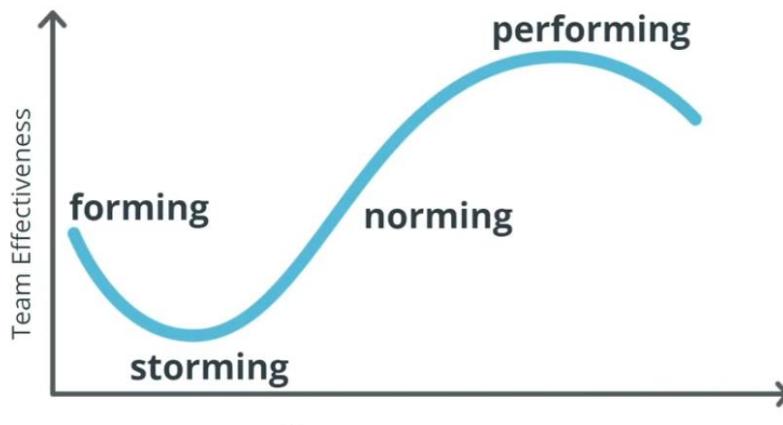


Norming

- Trust and camaraderie have developed
- Team members focus on collective objectives

Adapted from: Tuckman, B. W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), 384–399.

Tuckman Model

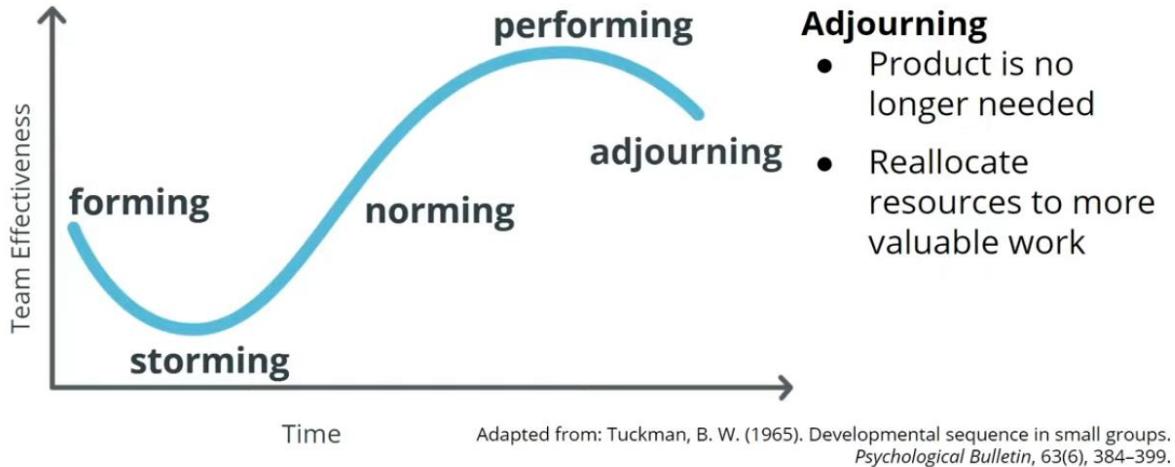


Performing

- Team has worked together successfully
- Team has developed a cross-functional work style

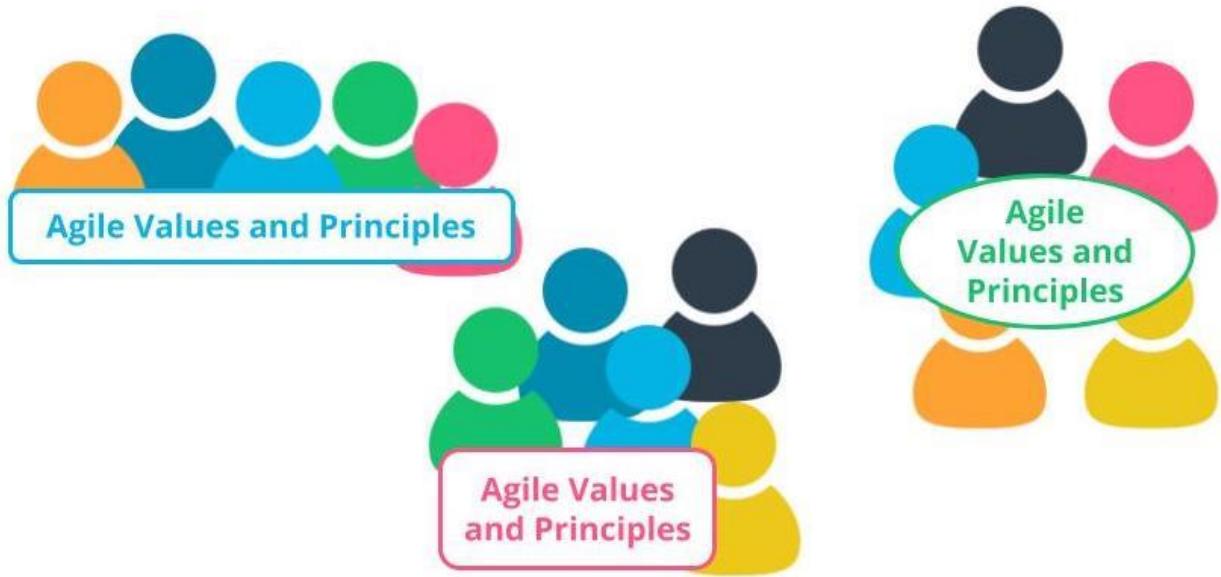
Adapted from: Tuckman, B. W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), 384–399.

Tuckman Model



Key Points About High Performing Teams

- Agilists believe that nothing is more critical to delivering exceptional products than teamwork.
- Agile Teams live and breathe the "we" mindset rather than "I."



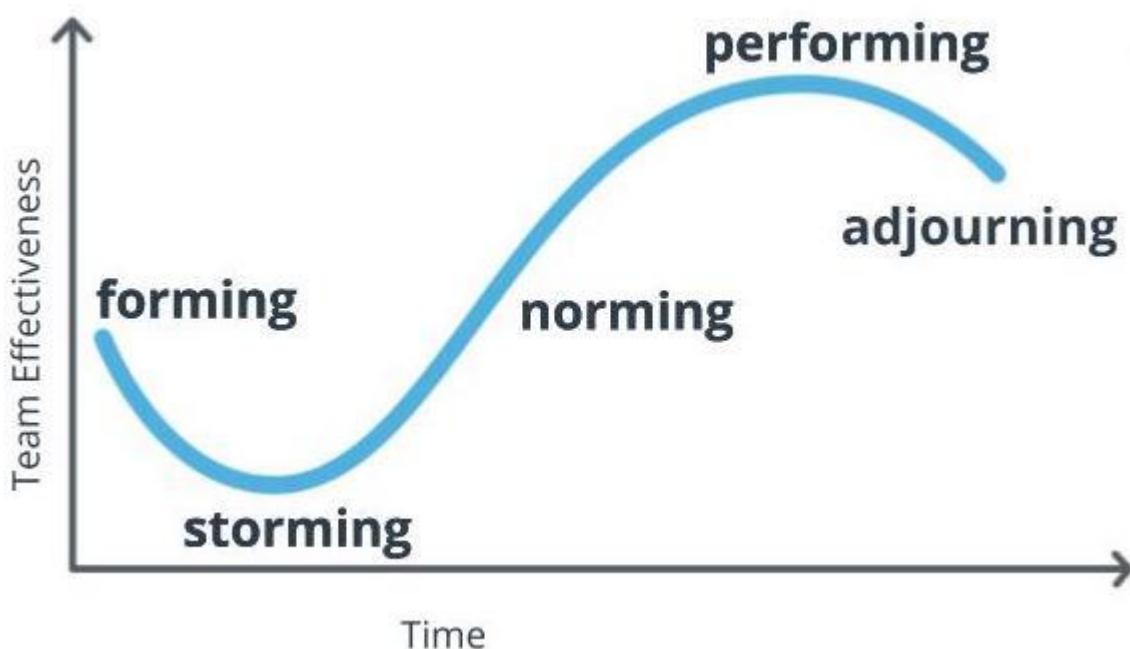
Teamwork is Agile's Secret Sauce

Tuckman Model

The Tuckman Model, which has 5 stages of team development, describes how an Agile team progresses into an awesome Agile squad.

- **Forming** - Agile Team comes together and the Facilitator helps the team form by explaining the ground rules, product vision, and expected outcomes.

- **Storming** - This is where a team's velocity is impacted because there tends to be some confusion and ambiguity around the work to be done, roles, and other product-related questions.
- **Norming** - Agile Team members develop a sense of trust and camaraderie. There's a healthy rapport and each team member starts to look for the collective objectives of the team's long-term success.
- **Performing** - Once an Agile Team has successfully worked together over a few iterations they should be in a state where they have gelled together and developed a strong cross-functional work style.
- **Adjourning** - If the business leaders realize that a product is not delivering value or is no longer needed in the market, the existing Agile Team members can be re-allocated to other more valuable work in the organization.



The Tuckman Model

Adapted from: Tuckman, B. W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), 384-399.

Quiz Question

A new Agile Team is being introduced to the project and the team is establishing ground rules. What Stage of Agile team development in The Tuckman Model is this team currently in?

Forming



Storming

Norming

Performing

Adjourning

Submit



Thanks for completing that!

That is correct! In Forming, the Agile team gets introduced to the project and works to establish ground rules.

Continue

Quiz Question

Teams should immediately start delivering additional value as soon as they are introduced to Agile.

True

False



Submit



X

Thanks for completing that!

Yes exactly! Teams need time and patient guidance to become a thriving and successful Agile team.

Continue

New Terms

- **Adjourning:** The stage in the Tuckman Model where the Agile team's goals have been completed, and the focus is on wrapping things up before team members get reassigned to other work
- **Forming:** The stage in the Tuckman Model when the team is getting accustomed to each other, ground rules are being established, and everyone is informed of the goals and objectives
- **Norming:** The stage in the Tuckman Model where a sense of trust develops among team members; interpersonal differences are taken care of now, and a sense of collaboration for the team's collective benefit arises
- **Performing:** The stage in the Tuckman Model where the team has matured into a well-established unit with a sharp focus on collaborative value delivery
- **Storming:** The stage in the Tuckman model where the team goes through a level of chaos in which there is confusion around the goals and objectives of the project, as well as confusion around roles and responsibilities

Additional Resources

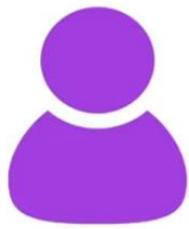
- [**High-Performance Teams - Why the Who Matters Less**](#): Fabian Schwartz discusses how the collective team is more important than having superstars on board.

- B W Tuckman, ***Developmental Sequence in Small Groups***, Psychological Bulletin 63, 1965.
This is where Bruce Tuckman first introduced the Tuckman Model.

Three Core Roles

What Are the Three Core Roles?

Core Roles



Product Owner



Facilitator



Agile Team

The Role of The Product Owner



PO

- Maximize value delivery
- Prioritize and manage the Product Backlog

Managing The Backlog

- Backlog items refined with necessary details
- Prioritized for business value
- Visible and Transparent



The Role of The Agile Team

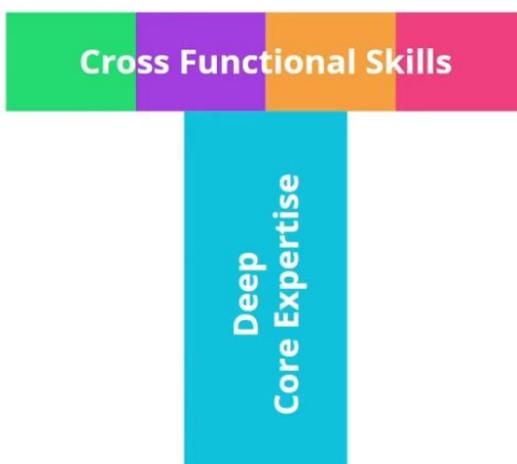


Agile Team

Self-directed and self-organized

- Team manages work after business based on prioritization by the PO
- Boosts Team's confidence and ability to deliver
- **Team** is responsible for delivering shippable product after every iteration

Team Members Have T-Shaped Skills



- Skill depth in at least one area
- Capabilities in areas outside their expertise
- Allows for role-blending
- Help across the team with other needs

Three Core roles in Agile Frameworks: Product Owner, Facilitator, and Agile Team

- A **Product Owner**, often referred to as PO in short, is responsible for working with both The Agile Team as well as the business to maximize the value of the product deliverables being worked on. The Product Owner is primarily responsible for prioritizing and managing the Product Backlog, or the prioritized work item list.
- **Agile Teams** are self-directed and self-organized. The Agile Team members are the ones who accomplish the actual work of completing and delivering a potentially shippable version of the product at the end of each Iteration.



Three Core Roles in Agile

Agile Team Members Exhibit T-Shaped Skills

When Agile Team members exhibit T-Shaped skills:

- They have tremendous expertise in at least one area.
- They are also capable of providing value in other areas outside their expertise.
- Team members are able to do role blending by going beyond their core vertical skill set.

Cross Functional Skills

Deep
Core Expertise

Agile Team Members Exhibit T-Shaped Skills

Facilitator As Servant Leader

To Serve and Support

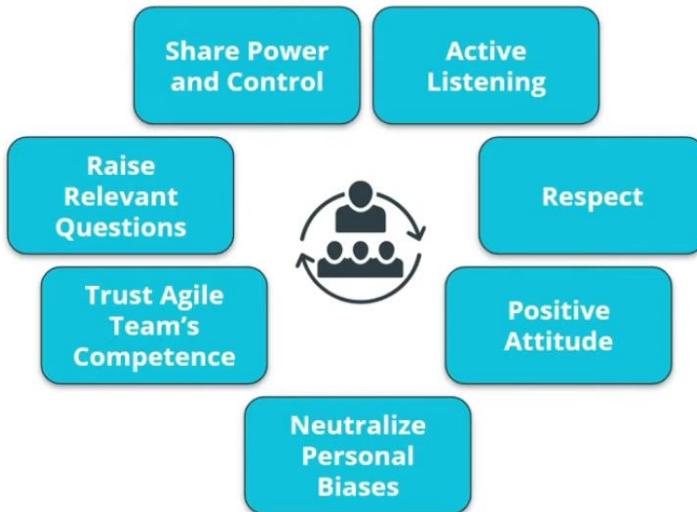
The Role of The Facilitator



Facilitator

- Keeps Agile Team moving towards business objectives
- Removes blockages
- Agile Coach

Servant Leadership



*To serve
and
support*

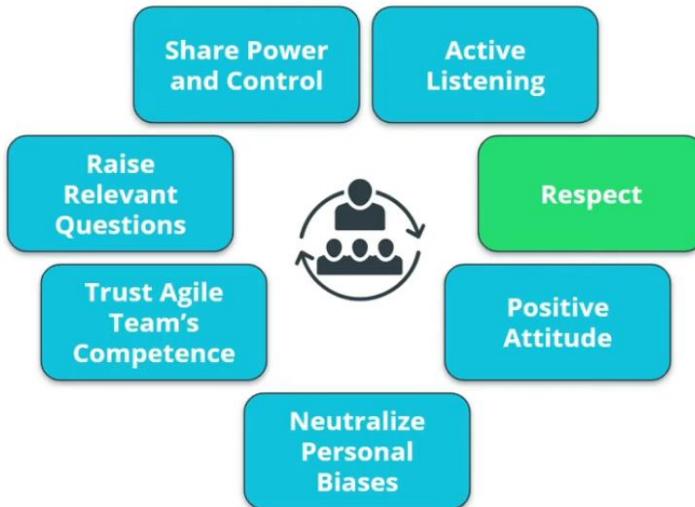
Servant Leadership



Active Listening

- Fully concentrate with other's perspective
- Dispute resolution and decision making
- Non-verbal cues to convey understanding

Servant Leadership



Respect

- Aligns with Agile Mindset
- Treat everyone with integrity and honor

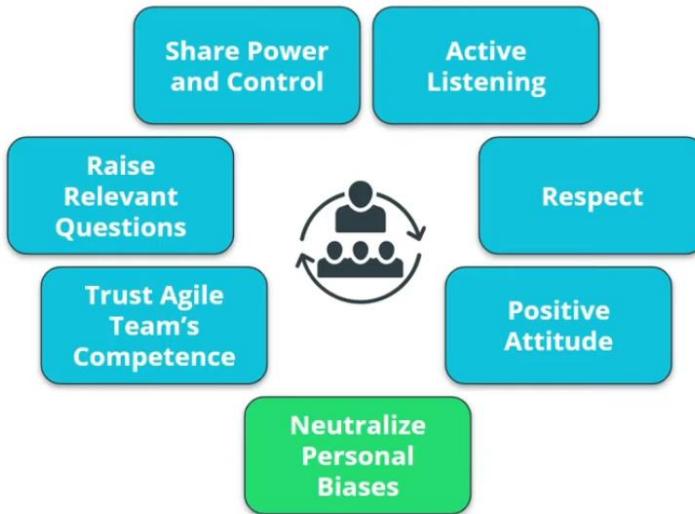
Servant Leadership



Positive Attitude

- Essential during times of crisis or confusion
- Model desired behavior
- Contagious and positive energy spreads

Servant Leadership



Neutralize Personal Bias

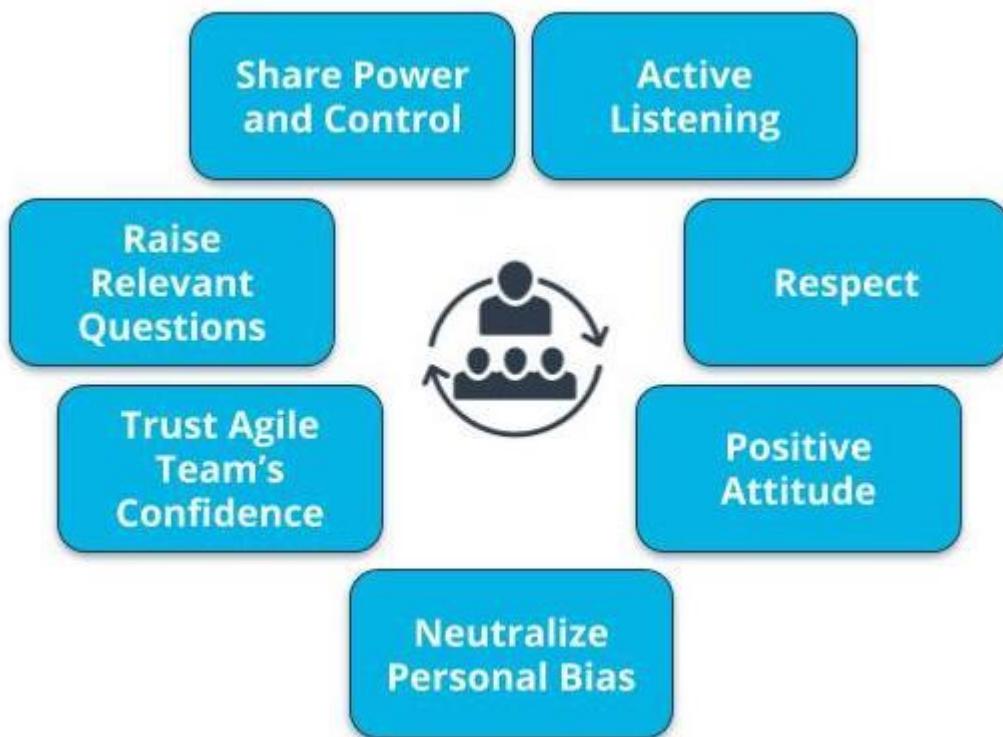
- Establish a Working Agreement
- Reduce risk of bias through Role Blending
- Establish transparent measurable goals

The Facilitator is responsible for ensuring the Agile Team moves along at an acceptable pace. The Facilitator is also usually an Agile Coach who promotes Agile practices and values.

Facilitators are Servant Leaders Who Serve and Support

Servant Leadership adopts a leadership viewpoint in which the leader positions himself or herself to serve and support. Servant Leadership includes:

- Active listening
- Respect
- Positive attitude
- Neutralize personal biases



Characteristics of Servant Leadership

Servant Leadership Helps the Team Deliver Results

Servant Leadership



Trust

- Between Facilitator, PO and Agile Team
- Between Agile Team members

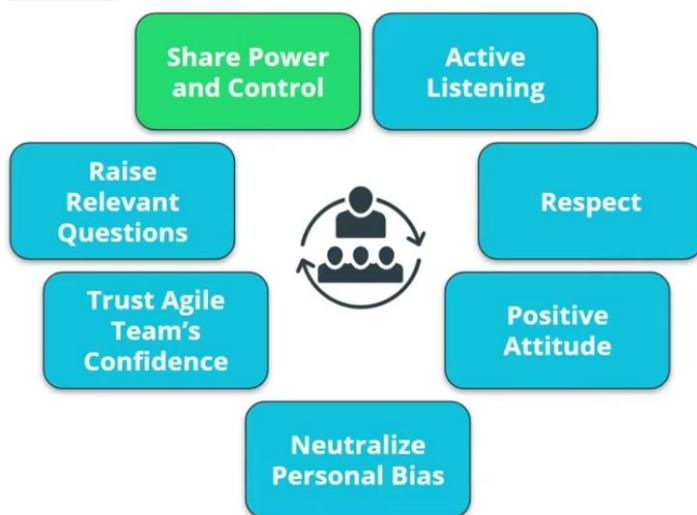
Servant Leadership



Raise Relevant Questions

- Learning Mode
- Ask unbiased open ended questions
- Honest and Collaborative

Servant Leadership



Share Power and Control

- Information
- Knowledge
- Authority

Servant Leadership



Positively
Deliver
Business
Value

Core Roles



Servant Leadership also includes:

- Trust Agile Team's competencies
- Raise relevant questions
- Shares power and control

Servant Leadership helps a Facilitator build a high-performing Agile team, which in turn enables the Facilitator to truly help the Agile Team achieve results that positively deliver business value.

New Terms

- **Facilitator:** The person who ensures that the Agile Team moves along at an acceptable pace towards the business objective and removes any blockages or impediments that may be slowing the team

- **Self-Directed:** Team members are empowered to decide among themselves who does what and how it is to be accomplished in a collaborative manner
- **T-Shaped Skills:** A strong vertical skill combined with the capability and willingness to step into other cross-functional needs
- **Team Member:** The people who accomplish the actual work of completing and delivering a potentially shippable version of the product at the end of each iteration

Additional Resources

- [**The Elusive Product Owner**](#): This Scrum Alliance post discusses the critical role POs play in Agile teams.

Quizzes: Three Core Roles

Thinking About the Three Core Roles

Quiz Question

TRUE or FALSE: The **Facilitator** represents the Voice of the Customer (VOC)

TRUE

FALSE



Submit

X



Thanks for completing that!

You are correct! The **Facilitator** is responsible for ensuring the Agile Team moves along at an acceptable pace. The **Product Owner** represents the Voice of the Customer.

Continue

Quiz Question

The Product Owner, being a part of the Core Team, must ensure that he/she collaborates with the other team members and the stakeholders throughout the project. Which of the following statements is true about project benefits realized due to collaboration?

- Collaboration helps identify the need for change in the process.
- Collaboration enables prioritization of requirements by the Product Owner.
- Collaboration enables all the team members and users to be on the same page in terms of project requirements. (✓)
- Collaboration requires the exchange of tasks between the team members at regular intervals.

Submit

X



Thanks for completing that!

Absolutely! One of the key strengths of Agile is that it allows for easier collaboration in the team, which ensures that all team members are on the same page in terms of project requirements. The various Ceremonies reinforce collaboration.

Continue

Exercise: Three Core Roles

Assigning the Three Core Roles

As SocialKare.gov starts on its Agile transformation, the team will need to fill the core Agile roles.

Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#) and

- Identify the three Agile Core roles and their responsibilities in the SocialKare.gov context
- Assign one of the listed SocialKare.gov employees to the Core Agile Roles
- Explain your assignments



Key SocialKare.gov Employees

This information also is available in the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#).

- **John Details:** John is a detail-oriented individual who likes to plan everything out in tremendous detail. He has several years of experience as a Technical Project Manager. Prior to stepping into the role of Project Manager, John was a Developer. He is known to have good communication skills.
- **Sarah Tenure:** Sarah has been with the Agency responsible for launching SocialKare.gov for over 2 decades. Sarah has a lot of

business knowledge and carries a certain amount of credibility due to this tenure. Sarah is strong-headed and likes to make decisions based on how she sees things because she believes she has better insight than others who may have been with the organization for as long as she has.

- **Tim Devs:** Tim has excellent technical skills. He prefers working as an individual contributor where he can spend time diving into the technical challenges on his own. He is well respected for his technical expertise. Tim maintains a strong focus on technical delivery and prefers the business users to stay out of his way while he is working through the development work. Tim leads a team of 5 developers with specialized vertical skills who are also on this project team
- **Jane Dollars:** Jane has sponsored this project. She is a senior executive and likes to stay involved with the day-to-day activities of projects that she sponsors.



Three Core Roles

Review the SocialKare.gov case and focus on the employees. Identify the three Agile Core roles and their responsibilities and assign a SocialKare.gov employee to each role. Explain your assignments.

- Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#)
- Find the [Three Core Roles worksheet](#) in the [Agile Foundations Course Workbook](#)
- In the worksheet, identify the three Agile Core roles and their responsibilities in the SocialKare.gov context
- Assign one of the listed SocialKare.gov employees to the Core Agile Roles
- Explain your assignments



X

Thanks for completing that!

Nice work! What did you consider when assigning roles? You can see my solution in the next video.

[Continue](#)

Solution: Three Core Roles

My Solution

Three Core Roles Exercise

- Identify three core roles in the SocialKare.gov context
- Assign resources to the three core roles



Three Core Roles Exercise



Role	Responsibilities	Employee	Justification
Facilitator	Doubles up as Agile Coach Facilitating the Agile Team's work Protecting from problems	John Details	Good communication skills Experience as a Project Manager helpful

Three Core Roles Exercise



Role	Responsibilities	Employee	Justification
Product Owner	Voice of the Customer (VOC) Prioritize Backlog Share Business Decisions & Provide Information	Sarah Tenure	Business Acumen Credibility Relationship with Business Users

Three Core Roles Exercise



Role	Responsibilities	Employee	Justification
Agile Team Member	Responsible for Creation and Delivery of solutions	Tim Devs	Important Technical Skills

Identify the Three Agile Core Roles and Responsibilities for the SocialKare.gov Team

- **Facilitator** - Can double up as an Agile Team coach or project lead at SocialKare.gov, is responsible for facilitating the Agile Team's work, obtaining resources for it, and protecting it from problems. The recommended employee is [John Details](#).
- **Product Owner** - Represents the SocialKare.gov stakeholders and specifically is known as The Voice of the Customer (VOC); the one individual who is responsible for the prioritized work item list, called a Product Backlog; will be responsible for prioritizing the backlog, share business decisions in a timely manner, and for providing any

- requirements or functionality related information to the Agile Team in a timely manner. The recommended employee is **Sarah Tenure**.
- **Agile Team Member** - Primarily includes developers who are responsible for the creation and delivery of a system; However, all other Agile team members will also be included in this category. This includes, but is not limited to, those who will conduct modeling, programming, testing, business analysis, front-end design, release activities, and others. The recommended employee is **Tim Devs**.

Thinking Like an Agilist ✓

Was it difficult to assign the roles? Do you think each team member will appreciate the role they were given and understand why they were chosen?

Your reflection

It was a little bit difficult to chose who can have the role of a Product Owner. I thought that Jane Dollars was a good fit for that role because she is the preson with the money, and because she likes to be involved in the day-to-day activities of the project, but didn't think about the important business experience of Sarah Tenure, and I thought that due to her very traditional approach it would be better to keep Sarah Tenure out of the project.



Things to think about

Thanks for your response. Selecting the right person for each Core Role can have a significant impact on the team's success.

High Performing Agile Teams

What Is a High Performing Agile Team?

High Performing Agile Teams



- Deliver consistent results
- Model desired behavior and characteristics
- Surpass expectations

High Performing Agile Teams



Self-Directed and Independent



- Unleashing team ambition
- Cutting unnecessary red tape

T-Shaped Small Teams

- Small teams deliver Agile, product-centric value
- T-shaped skills allow role blending



Focused on A Mission



- Unleashing team ambition
- Cutting unnecessary red tape

Supported By Executives

- Create the right environment
- Push for cultural transformation
- Breakdown silos
- Step back and allow teams to flourish



Agile Teams Make Decisions On Their Own

- Minimal dependence on other teams
- Highly motivated and skilled
- Shared sense of purpose



Agile Teams Develop Team Norms and Ground Rules

- Mutually agreed upon by the team
- Useful for guiding group behavior
- Enabler for discussing the 'undiscussable'



High Performing Agile Teams have the following in common.

They are:

- Independent and self-directed
- Small, T-shaped teams
- Focused on the mission
- Supported by executives

Moreover, Agile Teams make decisions on their own. They also develop team norms and ground rules, which are useful for guiding group behavior towards a common purpose.



Attributes of High Performing Agile Teams

Building High Performing Agile Teams

Building A High Performing Agile Team

Committed to:

- Delivering value
- Continuous improvement
- Agile mindset



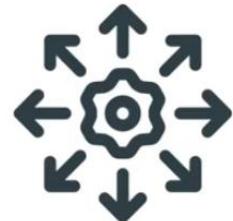
Inspire the Agile Team



- Senior Leadership should inspire
- Creates enthusiasm
- Team understands their contribution to the organization

Build Cross Functional Diverse Team

- Diverse perspectives leads to richer options for solutions
- Team benefits from different viewpoints



Maintain Focus As Team Evolves



- Team needs breathing room to grow
- Culture needs to guide evolution so the team stays focused
- Unsatisfied team delivers unsatisfactory results

Encourage Innovation and Free Thinking

- Talk openly constructively
- Discuss challenging questions
- Drives better results



Communicate Clearly



- Clarity in direction for the Team
- Lack of clarity frustrates the Team
- Clear communication benefits everyone

Work Collaboratively To Solve Problems

- Allows Team to take advantage of different skill sets and perspectives
- Stimulates creativity
- Small Agile Team size helps



Timebox Meetings



- No hostages
- Break away from process centric mindset
- Minimize unproductive meetings

Recognize and Appreciate

- Built into the Agile frameworks
- Simple steps can be a motivator
- Periodic and consistent reminders of the Agile Team's contributions



Include Uncommitted Objectives



- Identifies work that is planned but without a full commitment
- Allows for flexibility while driving team to accomplish the more
- Builds and fuels the team's confidence

Take Time Out to Connect and Have Fun

- Encourage team members to be themselves
- Removes toxicity
- Having fun is a key strategy for driven teams



High Performing Agile Team Development and Management

- Inspire the Agile Team
- Build cross functional diverse team
- Maintain focus as the team evolves
- Encourage innovation and free thinking
- Communicate clearly
- Work collaboratively to solve problems
- Timebox meetings
- Recognize and Appreciate
- Include uncommitted objectives
- Take time out to connect and have fun

High Performing Agile Teams Never Disappoint

- Delivers consistent results despite challenges
- Models desired behavior
- Surpasses expectations



Leadership allows the Team to be self-directed, independent and ambitious in delivering value

Building a High Performing Agile Team

Let's look at how we can build a high performing Agile Team:

- Inspire the Agile Team.
- Build a Cross-functional Diverse Team.
- Maintain Focus as Team Evolves.
- Encourage Innovation and Free Thinking.
- Communicate Clearly.
- Work Collaboratively to Solve Problems.
- Timebox Meetings.
- Recognize and Appreciate.
- Include Uncommitted Objectives.
- Take Time Out to Connect and Have Fun.

Building a High Performing Agile Team

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- Communicate Clearly.
- Work Collaboratively to Solve Problems.
- Timebox Meetings.
- Recognize and Appreciate.
- Include Uncommitted Objectives.
- Take Time Out to Connect and Have Fun.

High Performing Agile Teams Never Disappoint

According to the American author Dan Pink, a high performing team is given purpose, an opportunity to develop mastery, as well as autonomy in decisions. Such a high-performing Agile Team never disappoints. Such Agile Teams deliver phenomenal results consistently, regardless of the challenges they encounter. Senior leaders in an organization can turbocharge an Agile Team by enabling them to be self-directed and independent.



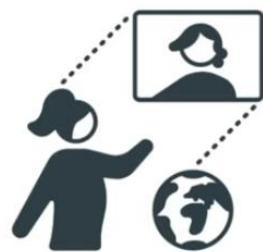
High Performing Agile Teams Never Disappoint

Remote Agile Teams

In an increasingly interconnected global business landscape, High Performing Agile Teams have to identify issues and benefits related to organizing and managing remote Agile Teams. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has genuinely changed the landscape with remote Agile Teams being accepted as a valuable norm.

The Need For Remote Agile Teams

- Business is globally interconnected
- COVID pandemic necessitated remote work at an unprecedented level
- Permanent change to team management norms?



Team Communication



Limited communication can impact Team bonding



Use technology to creatively connect as a Team

Time Zone Differences



Teams find it hard to sync up calendars



Use up-front planning to ensure the Team connects

Work From Home



Work from home adds distractions and can impact well-being



Set a clearly defined schedule and home office location

Fewer Catch-ups



Reduces collaborative moments



Use virtual communication tools



Lack of Team Cohesion



Reduces collaborative moments



Ensure a clear vision and clarity on responsibilities



Remote Agile Teams



- Remote is here to stay!
- Covid-19 pandemic has shown the value of remote Agile teams
- Remote should be a high priority for successful organizations

Implementing Remote Agile Teams

Working with a remote Agile team successfully requires attention to the following:

- Team communication.
- Time Zone Differences.

- Work From Home Best Practices.
- Catch-Ups.
- Lack of Team Cohesion.

Remote Agile teams are definitely here to stay for the foreseeable future. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a sea change in terms of the acceptance of the value of remote teams.



Remote Teams Are Here to Stay!

Additional Resources

- Andy Fieldhouse. ***Getting Teamwork Right: The Key to Happy, Successful and Resilient Teams***. Rethink Press, 2020.
This book discusses in detail how to create highly functional teams.
- Daniel H. Pink, ***Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us***, Riverhead Books, 2011.
In this book, Dan Pink thoroughly covers what drives skilled teams to deliver value.

Quizzes: High Performing Agile Teams

Thinking About High Performing Agile Teams

Quiz Question

TRUE or FALSE: High performing teams are driven by Purpose, Financial Incentives and Mastery

TRUE

FALSE

Submit



Thanks for completing that!

Correct! According to Dan Pink, high performing teams are driven by Purpose, Autonomy, and Mastery.

[Continue](#)

Quiz Question

Which of the following statements are TRUE for Executives to empower high performing teams?

- Unleash Agile teams in meaningful areas that directly affect the customer experience ✓
- Include strong performers on Agile teams, especially at the outset ✓
- Provide teams with transparency to the customers' needs ✓
- Allocate resources on an as-needed basis
- Define outcomes, then let teams self-direct and self-organize ✓

[Submit](#)

X



Thanks for completing that!

Yes, correct. To maximize the performance of high performing Agile teams, executives should assign the team the right resources to accomplish their work. This could include the authority to make key decentralized decisions, the ability to quickly recruit talent or onboard contractors without going through slow-paced human resources or procurement processes for the money to cover operating expenses, etc.

Continue

Exercise: High Performing Agile Teams

High Performing Agile Teams

High performing Agile Teams don't happen by accident. Team members need to be coached and nurtured to develop the skills and practices that make them more effective team members.

Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#). How can we help the SocialKare.gov Team evolve into a high performing Agile team? Select three team members and identify specific coaching recommendations to move to a more high performing model.





High Performing Agile Teams

Review the SocialKare.gov case and focus on the employees. Choose three team members and identify areas where they are not following Agile best practices. Share suggestions for improvement as coaching opportunities and explain why the coaching is needed.

- Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#).
- Find the **High Performing Agile Teams worksheet** in the [Agile Foundations Course Workbook](#)
- In the worksheet, list three team members who are not following Agile best practices
- Identify coaching opportunities for each team member to follow Agile best practices
- Provide justifications why the coaching is needed



X

Thanks for completing that!

Nice work! What coaching opportunities did you discover? You can see my solution in the next video.

[Continue](#)

Solution: High Performing Agile Teams

My Solution

High Performing Agile Teams Exercise

- Identify three Agile Team members who you can work with to build a high performing team
- Identify three recommendations to move to a high performing model



High Performing Agile Teams



Facilitator	Coaching Opportunity	Justification
John Details	Focus on facilitation and not technical solutioning; let the SocialKare.gov team be self-organized and self-directed	Former technical background might inhibit ability to allow the team to be more autonomous Should not stifle the Agile Team's innovative and creative side

High Performing Agile Teams



Product Owner	Coaching Opportunity	Justification
Sarah Tenure	Listen to the Agile Team for input Make final priority decisions Do not interfere in the Agile Team's technical decisions	Needs to be more collaborative Let Facilitator run the Ceremonies

High Performing Agile Teams



Team Member	Coaching Opportunity	Justification
Tim Devs	Allow cross-functional skills development Collaborate with business	Avoid micromanagement of developers Give room to innovate

My Solution

- John Details, as a Facilitator, should Focus on facilitation and not technical solutions; John needs to let the SocialKare.gov team be self-organized and self-directed.
- Sarah Tenure, the Product Owner, should Listen to the Agile Team for their input on priorities. Sarah should not interfere in the Agile Team's technical decisions at SocialKare.gov.
- Tims Devs, an Agile Team member, should allow developers on the team to develop cross-functional skills, as well as work to collaborate with the business more proactively.

Thinking Like an Agilist



How would you approach the conversations with each team member? Do you think they would be receptive to your input?

Your reflection

1. With John Details, I would approach from the point of view of the importance of innovation in Software Project Management. I would focus in the importance of applying his skills in a creative manner, and I would focus in telling him how the right application of his skills can impact the project and development of the product in a positive way. I think he could be receptive if the conversation develops around the importance of the application of his skills in the success of the project. 2. With Sarah Tenure I would try to create a presentation with case studies that show with statistics how a high performing agile team can impact very positively the profits of a company. I would focus in the idea that the other members of the team are also very capable things, with cross functional skills, who have experience in previous successful projects and which decision can have a positive impact in benefit of the company. I think she can be receptive, if emphasis is made in the idea of success. 3. With Tim Devs I would take an approach of making him realize how the development of cross functional skills, such as communication skills, team management skills, and project management can help him to be promoted in the company, to make maybe a bigger salary and to learn very useful knowledge that can impact his future cooperation in other projects and even the design of more efficient software architectures. I think that he could be very receptive.



Things to think about

Thanks for thinking about this. Sometimes the delivery is as important as the message. If you have a difficult message to deliver, it can be helpful to practice the conversation with a neutral party first.

Organizing an Optimal Agile Team and Non-Core Roles

What Are Size, Structure, and Cross-functional Skills in an Agile Team?

Optimal Agile Team Has Between 5-12 Members

< 5 Members

- Difficult to have all of the required competencies
- Team may not be multidisciplinary



> 12 Members

- Difficult to self-direct and self-organize
- Increasing noise/communications challenges



Agile Team Size and Structure



n = number of people

$$\text{Number of Communications Channels} = \frac{n * (n - 1)}{2}$$

More channels = more noise and more distractions

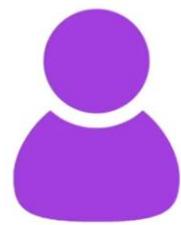


Clarity and Respect for Core Roles

- Role clarity is important
- Lack of clarity can cause stress and confusion



Clarity and Respect for Core Roles



Product Owner

- Voice of the Customer
- Product Champion



Facilitator

- Servant Leader
- Ensures the team runs smoothly



Agile Team

- Determines how the work gets done

Autonomous, Self-Organizing And Cross-Functional

- T-shaped Skills
- Ignite innovation
- Break silos
- Consistent flow of value delivery



Cross-Functional Agile Teams

- Everyone works towards a common goal
- All team members expected to exhibit T-shaped skills
- Small self-directed teams



Optimal Agile Team has Between 5-12 Members

- An Agile Team size of less than 5 would make it difficult to have all the competencies needed to do all the work within this one team since an Agile Team should be a cross-functional and multi-disciplinary unit tackling a common goal.
- An Agile Team larger than 12 skilled resources will make it difficult to self-direct and self-organize. As the number of team members increases, the number of communication channels also increases.

Clarity and Respect for Core Roles is Critical

Role clarity is an important prerequisite.

Agilists have to remind Agile organizations of the core roles and their responsibilities:

- Product Owner- Voice of the Customer(VOC) and Product Champion
- Facilitator- A Servant Leader
- Agile Team- Responsible for determining how to get the work done that the PO has prioritized

Cross-functional Agile teams are best run as small self-directed teams of 5-12 skilled resources.



More Communication Channels = More Noise

Non-Core Roles

While Non-Core Roles are not defined as mandatory in all Agile Frameworks, they can play a key role in the success of Agile Product Delivery.

- **Stakeholders** - Stakeholders can include Customers, Users, Sponsors, and others who have an interest in the product being worked on, but are not involved in the day-to-day development of the solution results.
- **Vendors and Strategic Suppliers** - Vendors and Strategic Partners provide products and services that are usually not within the core competencies of the organization or Agile Team.
- **Center of Excellence (CoE)** - Many organizations have a Center of Excellence focused on either Project or Product Delivery. A CoE often provides guidance on Governance and Reporting requirements to executives and regulators.
- **Enterprise Architect** - Reviews technical solutions to ensure they align with the overall organization's architecture.
- **Domain Subject Matter Expert** - Provides valuable support to the PO and Business Analyst on domain knowledge.

A successful Agile Team is typically both influenced and supported by several key Non-Core Roles.

Coaching Models

Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition

The Dreyfus model presents a simple-to-understand framework for measuring an individual's progress in any skill they are looking to acquire and gain expertise in. The five developmental stages identified in the Dreyfus Model for Skill Development are:

1. Novice
2. Advanced Beginner
3. Competent
4. Proficient
5. Expert

Read more about the Dreyfus Model of skill acquisition: [The Five-Stage Model of Adult Skill Acquisition\(opens in a new tab\)](#)

Shu Ha Ri

Shu Ha Ri has its origins in Japanese Martial Arts. It is presented by experts as a way of thinking when learning a new skill. Alistair Cockburn is credited with introducing it in the Agile world when it comes to acquiring Agile skills for product development. There are three stages in Shu Ha Ri's knowledge acquisition model:

- **Shu:** Here the Agile team member mimics and follows the teachings of an expert.
- **Ha:** At the Ha stage, team members start to experiment and begin to dig deeper into the theory that is driving the expert's teachings
- **Ri:** When someone reaches the Ri stage, they have directly experimented and experienced how teaching is beneficial to the Agile team's maturity. This allows them to get creative and adapt to their unique circumstances and organizational context.

You can read more about Shu Ha Ri here:

- [Shu Ha Ri: An Agile Adoption Pattern\(opens in a new tab\)](#)
- [Becoming agile with ShuHaRi\(opens in a new tab\)](#)

New Terms

- **Center of Excellence (COE)**: A unit comprised of seasoned experts in the organization that provide the Agile team support, best practices, guidance, and perhaps even training on Agile practices
- **Enterprise Architect (EA)**: A team member who ensures IT and the business units are aligned

Quizzes: Organizing an Agile Team

Thinking About Organizing an Agile Team

Quiz Question

TRUE or FALSE: Agile recommends a multidisciplinary way of composing teams that has implications for nearly every business function.

TRUE



FALSE

Submit



Thanks for completing that!

Correct! A successful Agile organization has several such teams. These are small-sized teams that have many or all of the required skills to deliver the product results.

Continue

Quiz Question

The Facilitator invites 5 attendees to a ceremony. How many communication channels are there in this meeting?

- 15 ✓
- 10
- 5

Submit



X

Thanks for completing that!

Yes, correct! It is important to remember to add the Facilitator as well to the communication channels formula.

Continue

Exercise: Non-Core Roles On An Agile Team

Identifying Non-Core Roles at SocialKare.gov

Agile Teams have non-core roles too! Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#) and identify some of the non-core roles that

make sense for the SocialKare.gov team. Explain why those roles are necessary for the SocialKare.gov team.



Non-Core Roles

Review the SocialKare.gov case. Identify at least three non-core roles for the Agile Team. Explain why that role is important to the team's success.

- Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#)
- Find the **Non-Core Roles worksheet** in the [Agile Foundations Course Workbook](#)
- In the worksheet, identify at least three non-core roles for the SocialKare.gov team
- Explain why those roles are important for the team

X



Thanks for completing that!

Great job! What non-core roles did you identify? You can see my solution on the next page.

Continue

Solution: Non-Core Roles On An Agile Team

My Solution

Organizing an Agile Team Exercise

- Recommend three non-core roles
- Their value to the Agile Team



High Performing Agile Teams



Non-Core Role	Justification
Sponsor	Senior sponsorship is critical Sponsor provides formal authorization and funding

High Performing Agile Teams



Non-Core Role	Justification
Enterprise Architect	Valuable technical resource Can seek guidance on alignment with SocialKare.gov enterprise wide architecture model

High Performing Agile Teams



Non-Core Role	Justification
Domain Subject Matter Expert	Valuable resource for Product Owner Can provide domain knowledge and advice

Recommend Three Non-Core Roles

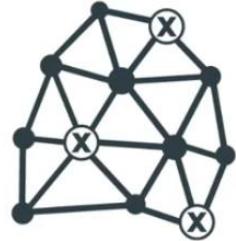
- **Sponsor** - Senior sponsorship is critical to the success of any Agile product delivery.
- **Enterprise Architect** - An Enterprise Architect will be a valuable resource for the technical team members to seek guidance on to ensure whatever they develop is in alignment with SocialKare.gov's enterprise-wide architecture model.
- **Domain Subject Matter Expertise** - This individual can be very beneficial for the Product Owner, as well as Business Analyst. This person can be called upon as needed to provide Domain knowledge and advice.

Agile Governance

What Is Agile Governance?

Agile Governance

*Decentralized
Decision Making*



Tolerances Are Essential For Agile Governance

- Especially true for cost and time
- When in danger, de-scoping is recommended
- Timeboxing is critical



Decentralized Decision Making Empowers The Team



- Open communication
- Constructive debate
- Quick resolution of issues
- All Team members commit to decisions

Agile Governance Delivers Goodwill and Trust

- Clarity about roles
- Thresholds and tolerances for decentralized decisions



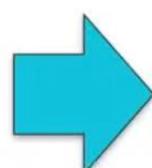
Agile Promotes Light and Simple Governance

- Teams self-monitor progress
- Use transparent metrics
- Assessment relies on observation and engagement



Some Decisions Remain Centralized

- Decisions that span a longer time frame
- Decisions that have an organization-wide impact
- Rare decisions that require deeper analysis



Agile Governance

*It is essentially about
Decision Making*



Effective Agile Governance is about Making Decisions

In order to enable effective Agile governance, the following needs to be kept in mind:

- Tolerances Are Essential For Agile Governance.
- Decentralized Decision Making Empowers The Team.
- Agile Governance Delivers Goodwill and Trust.
- Agile Promotes Light and Simple Governance.
- Strategic and Long-Term Decisions Remain Centralized.

Effective Agile governance ensures decisions are made in a simpler and lighter manner per the Agile Manifesto's guidance to keep things simple.

Additional Resources

- [**Governing Agile Teams**\(opens in a new tab\)](#) - This article discusses various facets of what is and what is not considered Agile governance.
- [**Organizing: Centralization and Decentralization**\(opens in a new tab\)](#) - This article compares the advantages of centralized and decentralized organization and describes the factors for determining the degree of decentralization decision-making.

Quizzes: Agile Governance

Thinking About Agile Governance

Quiz Question

TRUE or FALSE: Agile Governance should mirror the Agile Manifesto principles, particularly the art of simplicity - maximizing the work not done is essential.

TRUE



FALSE

Submit



Thanks for completing that!

Correct! Using agile, governance is applied with a light touch. Agile teams should be empowered and self-organizing. However, this does not equate to a disorderly or chaotic approach. Accountability to deliver value within the defined governance models remains with an effective cross-functional Agile team.

Continue

Quiz Question

Regarding Agile Governance, which of the following are TRUE?

- It is important to understand what your organization requires from a governance and compliance perspective.
- A key prerequisite is to engage with stakeholders.
- Business needs must be defined clearly.
- There is a consistent governance model for all Agile organizations that is mandated by The Agile Manifesto.



Submit

X



Thanks for completing that!

Well done! Yes, your organization may already have a structured approach to governance with defined documentation and procedures. The business needs to be able to assess that the Agile project will align with the strategic objectives of your organization.

Continue

Exercise: Centralized vs Decentralized Decisions

Applying Agile Governance at SocialKare.gov

As we learned, while decentralized decision-making is encouraged in Agile, some decisions need to remain centralized. Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#) and identify the types of decisions that need to be made. What are the characteristics of decisions that can be decentralized? And what are the characteristics of decisions that should be centralized?



Agile Decision Making

Review the SocialKare.gov case study. Identify three types of decisions that should be centralized and three types of decisions that should be decentralized at SocialKare.gov. Explain your recommendations.

- Review the [SocialKare.gov Case Study](#).
- Find the **Agile Decision Making worksheet** in the [Agile Foundations Course Workbook](#).
- In the worksheet, identify three types of decisions that should be centralized and explain why.
- Identify three types of decisions that should be decentralized and explain why.

X



Thanks for completing that!

Awesome! Was it difficult to decide which decisions should be decentralized? You can see my solution on the next page.

Continue

Solution: Centralized vs. Decentralized Decisions

My Solution

Agile Governance Exercise

- Three centralized decisions
- Three decentralized decisions



High Performing Agile Teams



Centralized Decisions	Justification
Span a longer time frame	Unlikely to alter in the short term
Have a larger organization wide impact	Large and organization wide economic benefits
Rare decisions	Not urgent and a deeper more detailed analysis is needed

High Performing Agile Teams



Decentralized Decisions	Justification
Regular or frequent decisions	A centralized decision here would be of limited value
Time critical decisions	Should not be delayed because such delays will have a significant cost of delay for SocialKare.gov.
Local or team level information is needed	These de-centralized decisions need specific local or team level context

Agile Governance Body Model

The exercise asked you to identify three decisions that should be centralized and three that should be decentralized at SocialKare.gov.

Centralized Decisions

- Decisions that are unlikely to alter in the short term at SocialKare.gov; examples could include a significant technology platform selection or organizational structure alignment.
- Decisions that deliver large and organization-wide economic benefits at SocialKare.gov; examples here could include standard tools for managing the product life cycle or project life cycle, as well

- as decisions related to which vendor partner to set up an offshore relationship with.
- Decisions which SocialKare.gov's leadership needs to make for rare decisions; examples of centralized decisions here include long-term product strategy, international expansion options and even decommissioning a product that has been in the market for a long time.

Decentralized Decisions

- Decisions that address frequent and common questions that arise at SocialKare.gov, such as Product Backlog prioritization.
- Time-sensitive decisions, which should not be delayed because such delays will have a significant cost of delay for SocialKare.gov.
- Decisions that need specific local or team level context, such as self-organization of individuals to a new challenge that is emerging.

What Kills High Performing Teams

Pitfalls That High Performing Teams Should Avoid

What Kills High Performance Teams

Pitfall #1



"Conflicts not managed effectively"

- Agile Teams sometimes spiral into an adversarial approach
- Agile Team must be reminded of the value of diversity in thoughts
- Ultimate goal is a win-win scenario

Pitfall #2



"Blame game begins"

- The blame game and negative criticism quickly escalates to unhealthy conflict
- Disengagement kicks in
- Learning mindset encourages curiosity and solution oriented thinking

Pitfall #3



"Rules of Engagement Not Followed"

- Open and honest communication requires adherence to Team rules of engagement
- Otherwise it kills trust
- Important to slow down when necessary to re-group

Pitfall #4



"Spark or passion is dimmed"

- If Agile Team does not see value in their work, it kills motivation
- Product Owner must continually remind Agile team of alignment with vision

What Kills High-Performance Teams?

- **Pitfall #1:** Conflicts are not managed effectively; it is important to regularly remind the Agile Team of the value of respectfully discussing differing opinions and suggestions.
- **Pitfall #2:** Blame game begins; there needs to be a tolerance for some failures since Agile Teams work in fast-paced situations. Such blame games and negative criticism quickly escalate to unhealthy conflict. The smarter and healthier outlook is to continue to keep the Agile Team on a learning mindset.

- **Pitfall#3:** Rules of Engagement are not followed; the Facilitator must ensure the Agile Team honors the agreed-upon rules of engagement and that team communications are frequent and relevant to avoid a high performing Agile Team from commencing its decline.
- **Pitfall #4:** Spark or passion is dimmed; if the Agile Team starts to perceive that their work is not as valuable, it can annihilate motivation. When the product vision starts to get foggy, the Product Owner needs to quickly step in to clarify.

Quiz Question

What kills the momentum of a high performing Agile team?

- Any conflict
- Discussing opportunities for improvement
- Following rules of engagement
- When the Agile team does not have a view of the product vision



Submit



Thanks for completing that!

Correct! If Agile Team does not see value in their work, it kills motivation. It is important for the PO to ensure the team understands their work is delivering value to the organization.

Continue

New Terms

- **Blame Game:** Circumstances in an Agile team where team members try to blame each other for issues and challenges rather than working together to collaboratively resolve what they are encountering

Additional Resources

- [**Governing Agile Teams**\(opens in a new tab\)](#): This blog post covers various abysmal Agile implementation mistakes.

Case Study

Case Study

Now that you've learned the roles and responsibilities of various roles on an Agile team, in the video below, Chirag Doshi, a Principle Consultant at ThoughtWorks, tells his personal anecdote on how he built an Agile team as a Tech Lead.

Blur The Role Boundaries

Getting the Best Results as an Agile Team

About Me

Chirag Doshi - ThoughtWorks

- 15+ years in agile software development
- Played roles in Development, Testing, Project Management
- Host an agile focussed podcast called [PractisingXP](#)
- Based in Pune, India
- Part of the India leadership team focused on strengthening the best parts of our culture

Context and Problem



Call Centre
Customer Service Application

- Replace dated desktop app with a modern web app application
- Get user experience design right
- Meet aggressive timeline

Solution

- Tight collaboration between Tech Lead and Experience Designer
- Balanced sophistication with simplicity
- Worked efficiently on user stories



Key Takeaways

Blur role boundaries

- Don't feel boxed by your role
- Participate in cross-role collaboration
- Pick up shared responsibilities with other roles

Benefits

- Increases team efficiency
- Improves software design and quality
- Gain a deeper understanding of software development
- Expands your ways of thinking

Mature Agile teams frequently **blur role boundaries within the team**. This flexibility results in higher levels of collaboration and co-creation and helps teams optimize for their overall team goals. It also creates a T-shaped profile for the team members.

The key takeaway from this case study is that if you are on an Agile team, consider blurring role boundaries. Don't feel boxed by your role. Collaborate and share responsibilities with people in other roles on the team. This increases team efficiency and improves the quality of the software you build. It also helps you gain a deeper understanding of software development and expands your ways of thinking.

Lesson Recap

What We Have Learned

Lesson Recap

- High Performing Teams
- Size, Structure and Skills
- Agile Governance



Up Next



Lesson Recap

In this lesson, we talked about:

- The characteristics of high performing Agile Teams.
- We then proceeded to talk about the size, structure, and skills of a High Performing Team. We discussed how Agile frameworks

- recommend a team size of between 5-12 skilled resources that are self-organizing and cross-functional with T-shaped skills.
- We then looked at Agile governance and how, based on the Agile Manifesto's guidelines, Agile recommends a lightweight and simple approach to governance. Where possible, decentralized decision-making is encouraged.
 - We finished up by talking about some pitfalls in which High Performing Agile Teams disintegrate and how to avoid those situations.

This lesson emphasizes how High Performing Agile Teams help organizations survive in such turbulent times. As the pace of change increases and the world of work makes ever greater demands on teams, high performing Agile Teams will become increasingly important.

In the next lesson, we will look at Agile Frameworks.

- High Performing Teams
- Size, Structure and Skills
- Agile Governance



What We Covered In This Lesson

Glossary

New Terms In This Lesson

KeyTerm	Definition
Adjourning	In the Tuckman Model's Adjourning stage, the Agile team's goals have been completed, and the focus is on wrapping things up before team members get reassigned to other work
Blame Game	Circumstances in an Agile team where team members try to blame each other for issues and challenges rather than working together to collaboratively resolve what they are encountering
Center of Excellence (COE)	The part of the organization that provides the Agile team support, best practices, guidance, and perhaps even training on Agile practices

KeyTerm	Definition
Enterprise Architect (EA)	A team member who ensures IT and the business units are aligned
Facilitator	The person who ensures that the Agile Team moves along at an acceptable pace towards the business objective and removes any blockages or impediments that may be slowing the team
Forming	Uncertainty is high during the Forming Stage in the Tuckman Model; this is when the team is getting accustomed to each other, ground rules are being established, and everyone is informed of the goals and objectives
Innovation Hub	Proactively working towards continual improvement with no compromise on technical excellence and quality
Norming	In the Tuckman Model's Norming stage, a sense of trust develops among team members; interpersonal differences are taken care of now, and a sense of collaboration for the team's collective benefit arises
Performing	In the Tuckman Model's Performing stage, the team has matured into a well-established unit with a sharp focus on collaborative value delivery
Self-Directed	Team members are empowered to decide among themselves who does what and how it is to be accomplished in a collaborative manner
Self-Organized	The team determines tasks and makes technical decisions about the work to be done after being given priorities by the PO
Storming	In the Tuckman Model's Storming stage, the team goes through a level of chaos in which there is confusion around the goals and objectives of the project, as well as confusion around roles and responsibilities
T-Shaped Skills	A strong vertical skill combined with the capability and willingness to step into other cross-functional needs
Team Member	The people who accomplish the actual work of completing and delivering a potentially shippable version of the product at the end of each iteration