Collaboration Master guide

Welcome to the Collab Master Guide. The reason for this document is to help the future Collaboration Master to settle in and understand their role as fast as possible. This document will discuss what the Collaboration Master did in the course Software Engineering Project Methods 2023(TMJN10) and what could have been improved. In order to understand what a Collaboration master is, there must first be an understanding of Scrum.

I do not have the experience to confidently teach you Scrum in this guide. But here is a super short, EXTREMELY condensed, bullet point guide of most important things in Scrum:
- Lightweight framework to improve communication and efficiency
- Three Pillars of Scrum:
  - Transparency in the process and work
  - Inspection of the process and product
  - Adaption and adjustments based on inspection
- Four Scrum events confined in "Sprints" to help uphold the Pillars:
  - Sprint Planning
  - Backlog Grooming
  - Daily Scrum
  - Retrospective
- Five values each member must follow for Scrum to work:
  - Commitment to the goals and supporting each other
  - Focus on doing the best that they can given the resources available
  - Openness in the work and challenges they are facing
  - Respect each other to be capable and independent people
  - Courage to do the right thing and to take on tough problems

Take this with a small grain of salt, you are gonna need to go read some literature and guides anyway.

Where can you learn Scrum as a Collaboration Master?

Short answer is that you'll learn it just like everyone else. Initially you'll only have the lectures and the course literature. The course literature The Elements of Scrum (2011) is a very good source of foundation for Scrum. Even if the book seems old/outdated it will still provide a solid foundation for you to build upon through experience and other online sources.

[The Scrum Guide](#) (2020) by Scrum.org was recommended to us by our Stakeholders, KnowIt. Scrum.org was founded by one of the co-creators of Scrum, and can be seen as one of the most pure sources of Scrum there is around. This guide is updated every couple of years by the organisation of people that invented Scrum. At the time of writing this guide the PDF is 14 pages of, straight to the point, information about Scrum. It outlines the basics of all the main Scrum roles, which will be very useful for first time users of Scrum.

What is your role as a Collaboration Master?

The role of a CM is to ensure communications and progress flows well throughout all squads. How does one achieve this? First and foremost this course is focused on Scrum and Agile (mainly Scrum). In Scrum, the CM is an extension of the Scrum Master(SM), just as every SM leads their individual squads, the CM leads all the SMs.

In this course the CM is also required to host and act as the Master of Ceremonies (MC) for the Stakeholder demos.

How can you help the Scrum Masters as a Collaboration Master?

The SM's tasks is as follows:
- Being the Scrum coach for their squad
- Enforcing Scrum process and ceremonies onto the team
- Ensuring that all squad members have a positive, productive experience with the Scrum ceremonies
- Facilitating collaboration
- Removing impediments

The CM will help the SMs by acting as their Scrum Expert, and facilitating the necessary environment for the SMs and their squads to improve. Here is what was done in 2023:
- Hold weekly meetings with SMs and discuss the happenings of the past sprint
  - What ceremonies were good/bad, why?
  - Gather feedback from their squads and discuss outliers
    - From weekly questionnaires and from discussions in retrospective
- Get help from an external Scrum "expert"
  - 2023: Retrospective Workshop with Bruce Scott from KnowIt
  - Other unused ideas:
    - How to hold meetings (for CM/SM and PO)
    - Inspection on Sprint Planning
    - Inspection on Backlog Grooming
    - Inspection on Retrospectives
  - Be creative, ask your SMs, what do they need help with?
- Act as mediator between Stakeholders and the squads
  - Gather questions from the squads, and ask them to your Stakeholders
  - Bring back feedback from the Stakeholders in order to help the squads improve

These are some of the actions taken in 2023 in order to help the SMs and their squads to improve on their Scrum process. They are in no way mandatory, adapt these points to suit your needs, maybe you will have better ideas.

From feedback that I gathered, the SMs really appreciated some alone time with an expert where they could ask questions and get a smaller lecture on a specific subject. With the only criticism being that they wish we had the first one earlier, and that there were more sessions.

How do you lead and host the Stakeholder demos as Master of Ceremonies?

Being the MC for a demo might seem intimidating at first, but it'll fall into a routine after a couple of tries. This demo is where you'll get most of your feedback on how the product as a whole. Here you will again need to act as a mediator between your company and the people from Stakeholder. This includes:

- Help squads prepare for the demos
    - Write a document
        - How long is their presentation?
        - What do they present?
- Have dedicated time before the demo for rehearsals
- Decide on a order so each squad knows when they are presenting
- CM will introduce each squad as they come forward
    - Bonus points if you know their names/roles (my own opinion)
- Receive feedback for groups and also the presentation so that you can help improve it for next time
    - Are they talking about the process too much/too little?
    - Not enough product demo?
- We used OBS in order to smooth over the transitions
    - One laptop at the front connected to the projector
    - Everyone connects to the laptop
    - If you are not tech savvy, find someone who is and recruit them to help you

Together with this document I will provide my version of the Demo Guidelines. The Demo Guidelines is only provided as a starting point and is in no way the final version. As your Stakeholders might have different demands and requirements compared to ours, I would recommend immediately changing it depending on the feedback presented after your first demo.

The goal of the presentation is for your company to present the product as a whole with the so-called group product demo. The group product demo is a collaborative demo between the squads that is supposed to represent all squads and their products, and show off how they are connected. This means that as much of the individual products needs to be connected as possible. I would recommend the future you as CM to get together with Build Master and all the individual POs from every group to start planning and introducing this within the first two weeks of the course.

The group product demo will not only satisfy the Stakeholders, in our case KnowIt, but it will also help the company work out all the missing connections for the product to work together. This gives the POs a chance to talk amongst each other to discuss their product and their goals with each other. Example for discussion points for these meetings would be:

- Dependencies between groups
- Group product demo script?
    - Following a User Story?
    - Which squad starts, how does it connect to the next squad?
    - Split the squads into separate two groups?
- Goal for the demo

- ○ Goal for this week?
- ○ Goal for the final demo?
- ○ What actions are taken in order to reach these goals?

Remember that even if the products require mock data it is good to show off the "hypothetical" scenario of how things would be connected(always mention where mock data is used). This way the progress of the product can be shown in future demos when you swap from mock data to live data.

For the FINAL demo, you are going to need a lot of time for prep and rehearsal. Plan it well, this year the rehearsals had little to no structure. The plan was to show up and run the script, but as it turns out, a lot of problems can occur in the span of a couple of days, which ends with us fixing bugs and issues up until the last second.

One fix for this could be to implement an enforced code stop earlier in the week, ensuring no "harmful" code that could cause issues for the products.