

 Member-only story

Scrum Masters Are the Most Useless Role in Tech

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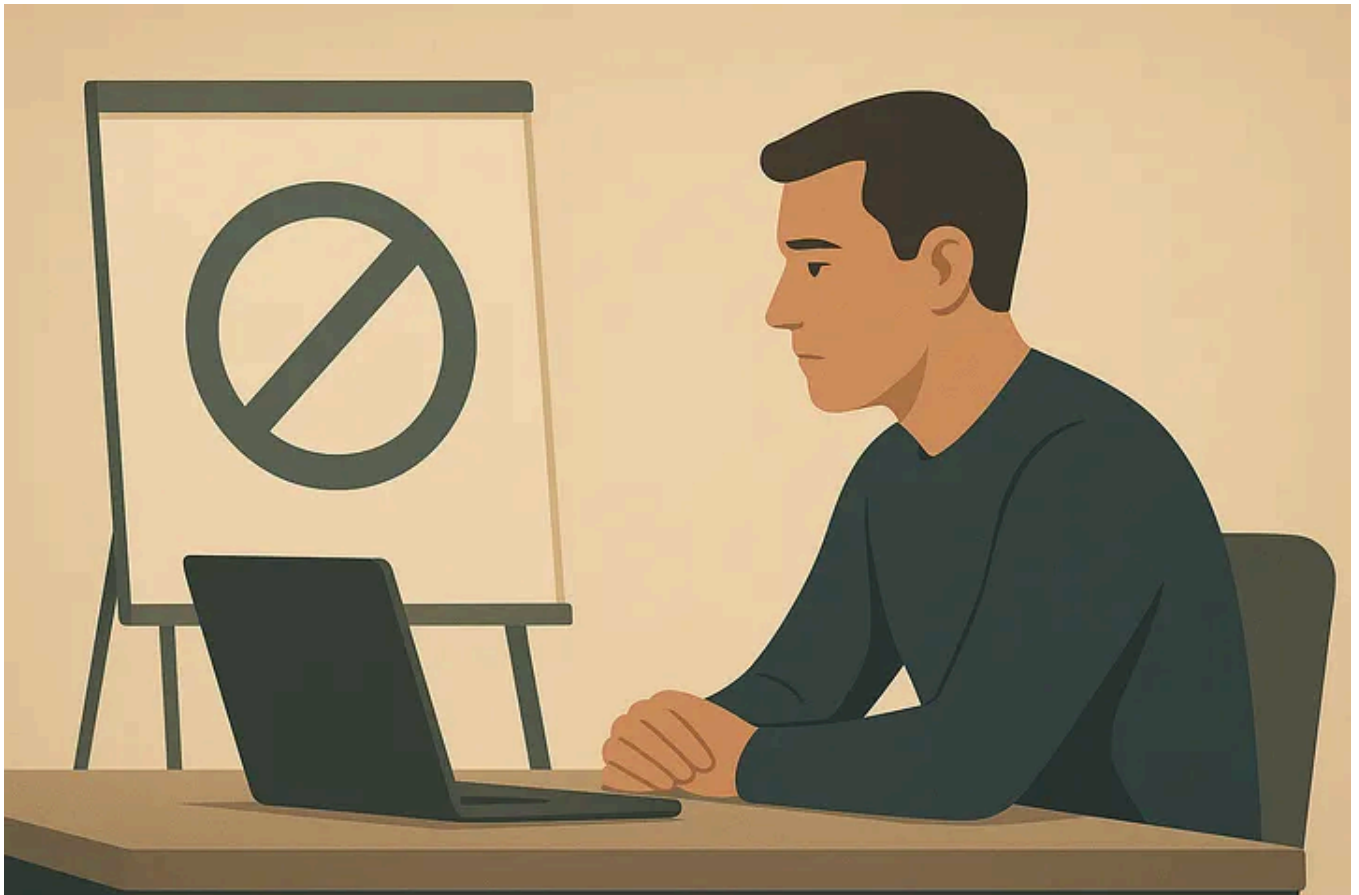


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I once worked on a team where the Scrum Master's biggest contribution was reminding us that "the stand-up is at 10." That's it. Not fixing blockers. Not helping us ship faster. Just cheerleading the obvious. And yet — this person's salary was bigger than the junior dev actually writing the code.



Tell me that's not insane.

The Awkward Truth Everyone's Whispering

Here's what nobody says out loud: Scrum Masters were invented to solve a problem that no longer exists. Back when Agile was shiny and new, managers needed someone to translate "sticky notes on the wall" into something execs wouldn't laugh at. But fast-forward a decade? Developers already know Jira. Teams already know how to run a retro. Most of us don't need a "ceremony babysitter."

So why are we still paying six figures for them? Habit. That's it. We just... forgot to kill the role.

Meanwhile, layoffs are gutting actual engineers. Companies slash backend devs, keep the Scrum Master, then wonder why velocity tanks.

A Story That Still Annoys Me

At one company, our Scrum Master had this ritual: every sprint review, she'd bring pastries. Same box, every time — powdered sugar ones that got on your keyboard, the weird cinnamon rolls nobody touched. She'd sit there nodding, saying things like "let's keep communication open."

And we — exhausted, red-eyed from chasing an impossible deadline — just wanted her to pick up one Jira ticket. Just one.

She never did. Because "that's not my role."

That box of stale cinnamon rolls is still burned into my memory. A literal metaphor for empty value.

What If They're Not the Glue — But the Weight?

Here's the twist nobody admits: Scrum Masters don't speed things up. They slow things down. Every extra meeting, every "quick alignment," every pointless "icebreaker" — it all eats hours. Hours that could have gone into solving real problems.

Developers already hate meetings. Adding a full-time role dedicated to *creating more of them* is like hiring a nutritionist who only brings donuts.

And the cruel irony? Teams that drop Scrum Masters often run smoother. Daily stand-ups get shorter. Retros are raw but productive. People cut the fluff and actually

build.

Okay, But What Do We Do Instead?

I'm not just ranting (well, I am, but also...). If you're in tech, here are things you could try this week:

1. **Kill the meetings, keep the rituals.** Stand-ups? 5 minutes max. Retro? Once a month. Do it async if you can.
2. **Rotate facilitation.** Don't crown one "Scrum Queen." Let devs, designers, even PMs take turns running stand-up. Shared pain = better respect.
3. **Make Jira the Scrum Master.** It already is. Use automation. Let the board tell you what's blocked.
4. **Promote actual problem-solvers.** Got a dev who unblocks others, notices bottlenecks, keeps morale high? That's leadership. Reward it.
5. **Track outcomes, not ceremonies.** Did the feature ship? Did customers care? No one outside your team gives a damn if you had a "good retro."

The Part You Don't Want to Hear

I know — some of you will say "but my Scrum Master is different." Maybe. But I've seen too many sit in Zoom calls nodding while devs scramble. Too many guardrails that became cages.

The hard pill: if your Scrum Master vanished tomorrow, most teams wouldn't notice. Except maybe fewer pastries.

And honestly? That should tell you everything.

. . .

Mic-drop ending:

Scrum Masters don't remove blockers. They *are* the blockers.

Scrum Master

Agile

Software Engineering

Productivity

Developer



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Written by Dax

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Dropping thoughts into the void of the internet's memory palace. Future archaeologists will thank me.

Responses (45)



Bgerby

What are your thoughts?



Nadolny L
Sep 29



This is one of those articles that made me smile. Once I read it, I realized the author doesn't understand the framework and reduces the Scrum Master role to a person who holds fancy meetings, keeping them in a position of insignificance and... [more](#)



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Tom Mellor
Sep 28



Too bad you had such an experience and that causes you to cast a broad condemnation. Guess it sucks to be you. I don't think future archaeologists will care.



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[Reply](#)



Reinaldy Fargo
Sep 30



I think it's time to look back to what scrum is meant to be. All of the ceremonies have it's own purpose.

Standup is meant to kept everyone updated, retrospective is meant to look back on the past sprint so we don't do the same mistakes.

Scrum master... [more](#)



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