# Leadership Role Alignment Exercise

This document is designed to help clarify your role, responsibilities, and processes. Please provide specific, actionable information, including links, tools, and dashboards you use in your daily work. Your responses will help us align on expectations and identify areas for support.

## 0. Personal Details

* - Name: Arkady Fenev aka Ark
* - Title: SDM (BB team)
* - Start Date: 23rd of September 2024

## 1. Role Definition

In 5-10 bullet points, define your role and responsibilities. Be specific about your core accountabilities and key outcomes.

* Making sure every developer and QA engineer have no stress or blocking problems
* Facilitating regular one on one with everyone report to me
* Working closely with the Project Manager regarding sprint progress and releases
* Working closely with the Project Manager during performance review
* Onboarding new developers (if they are in my time zone)
* Facilitating unplanned one on one meetings if emergency took place
* Helping resolving conflicts or improving communication between team members
* Working closely with product owners when triage help is needed or during emergencies
* Helping with staying as close to SCRUM practices as possible
* Helping during requirements evaluations and sprint planning
* Working with Architect to learn how things done and how improve them
* Working with SDM from SC team to be on the same page and improve processes
* Sometimes playing role of L2 support if nobody else can help during late US hours
* Pushing forward fixing blocking production issues
* Helping developers with bugs investigations sometimes
* Helping developers and Project Manager to see bigger picture for our product
* Helping facilitating standup meetings or developer syncs when facilitator is out
* Participating higher level product planning and statuses meetings
* Trying to go deeper into the code review (did not do much yet)
* Trying to encourage developers and QAs to learn new stuff and go to conferences  
  ***(sorry, did not pay attention that there should be 10 maximum)***

In a nutshell: I must make developer happy and productive, while improving processes and communication both in team and cross-teams. At the same time, I must react to emergencies and strive to bring the quality and stability of our products to higher level.

## 2. Daily/Weekly Workflow

Describe your regular operating rhythm. Provide links to tools or dashboards you use.

* **Daily:**I participate standups for our 3 mini trams (squads);  
  Checking if we had any production issues & deal with it;  
  Checking how are we doing with most prioritized and strategic projects  
  (especially 2 at the moment: Clover Freezes etc. issues fix and Clover Go);  
  Do all other planned (normally from yesterday) things;  
  React to any new things and requests from team members, boss etc.;  
  Achieve zero inbox state both in Outlook and Teams;  
  Plans things for tomorrow, intra-day or long-term;
* **Weekly:**Depending on the week participating close/open or grooming sprint session;  
  Having 1-on-1 meetings with some devs/QAs (with others biweekly/monthly);  
  If zero inbox was not achieved, I try to deal with it – solve or plan for next week;  
  I have regular meeting with Ivan Z – SDM from SC team;  
  I revaluate how we do with most strategic projects and increase urgency as needed;  
  Helping with releases (if any) and track release success level (PRDMX issues as well)
* **Tools or dashboards I use to track progress:**We have Sprint Board <https://salonultimate.atlassian.net/jira/software/c/projects/BBIM/boards/209?sprints=3175>

Prod bug at glance lists I created thank to you as well (was checking manually before)  
<https://salonultimate.atlassian.net/issues/?filter=16141>  
<https://salonultimate.atlassian.net/issues/?filter=16142>  
I must transparently admit I did not use much more automated tools besides Git Diff when I did code review sometimes (but it is not about progress anyway)  
  
Yeah, we also have one simple file Sergey created and asked me and Ivan Z to updated upon releases and PRDMX hot fixes. It is related to what I mentioned above in my weekly activities saying “track release success level (PRDMX issues as well)”  
<https://salonultimate.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/PjM/pages/4996268074/PRDMX+Reaction+times+Time+to+resolution+based+on+recent+tickets+and+release+issues>   
  
Also, of course, I do have few files internally where I mark my one on one meetings with developers and some details about that, including gathering feedback from them and I see at glance when and with who we had more interactions and progress. Other than that and internal feelings so far during first couple months I was relying more to the system which was in place and retro meetings where we see how much we fails. But again I also notices how easily we just pass tasks from sprint to sprint even during sprint which also makes it harder for me to apply metrics after all. Besides that, it was a first couple months for me, most of them unfortunately were spent in the urgent Clover Freezes fixes and stuff like that & I feel that I am struggling with progress measuring. I am open for any advice here and also trying to encourage team to follow Scrum more closely which can help us all to track progress better.

## 3. Tracking Progress and Accountability

Explain how you track work and measure accountability. Include links to specific tools, dashboards, or reports.

* **- How do you track tasks in progress?**OK, continuing in a spirit of no right or wrong answers and following same philosophy as you to be an open book, I must admit couple things: I did not track all individual tasks per each developer all the time… and I am even still learning about some features some of them working on. Here from what I see in reality, and from what I learned reading SDM and PM role’s descriptions, I see that I trust PO (in my case Olga) continue to do great job with individual tasks tracking while I see more bigger picture, get updates daily during standups and only connect more precisely when I (or she or we both) see that either one specific ticket (or developer) are stuck for longer than needed, or again when we have emergency around some bugs (like we had mostly during last 4-5 weeks). The tool I use, it is again the sprint board + my own simple notes (for now).  
  I also understand the doc is the same for all roles, so some are more applicable etc.
* - How do you monitor milestones or deliverables?  
  Here, on contrast, I know it is more my responsibility to see what was delivered (or not and why) and if deadlines were met, and release was successful. For now, I simply was monitoring if the sprint goals were achieved or not. Also talking about normal releases or hot fixes, I with the help of the team monitor how successful they were.   
    
  For now, as I mentioned above, we just have simple document from Sergey to track those in order to calculate success rate and reaction time over some time later. But I would like to use something more sophisticated in future and move towards more or less frequent planned releases along with super fast hot fix releases as needed.   
    
  I would also like to make sure we follow some crucial scrum practices more closely, specifically not removing (and ideally not adding) anything to sprint during the sprint, to be able then to measure more accurately how much we failed or succeeded and use this knowledge for better planning. I noticed often sprints are mostly used just like chunks of time to plan the work old fashion way unfortunately.
* - How do you evaluate outcomes and success metrics?  
  Again, I would like to evaluate using sprint burned down but for now for now it will not be accurate as we do not follow rules strictly. So, I use it approximately at least. I also track when something was moved out of sprint during the sprint, so it was admitting fail head of time kind of. I know it is all vaguer and then I can forget things, but as I said while I was a new guy and was not push so much, I was observing more.  
    
  Main release success metrics for me of course are as simple as monitoring post deploy and confirming the issues is fixed and no new complaints reported (if it was hot fix) or that new features or regular bug fixes are behaving as expected.  
    
  As we have a lot of moving parts with many new features developed and tons of still unresolved production bugs at the same time, honestly, I don’t use a ‘deadline’ as a metric at all for now. We always here that we do not meet it, and it is indeed always like that. From what I learned during my first couple months I see it as a planning problem and a rather big misalignment between business plans, developers ability (50% of them are new or so) and quality of the code we already have on hands (no comments here).

## 4. Team Health

Describe your team and how you monitor its health. Provide examples of how you assess workload, morale, and effectiveness.

* - Who is on your team (roles, responsibilities)?  
  In my team I have 12 developers and 4 QA (3 manual and 1 automation). Those 16 people report to me. I have peers in the team itself: Olga (project manager), John (product manager and product owner of S2), Yamini (PO in S1) and Ruslan (PO in S3). We also work with designer and UX designer. 23 people including me.  
    
  Developers are developing)) QAs are testing & designers are doing cool designs!  
    
  Olga (ProjM) is playing scrum master role, track the progress and help facilitating meetings, onboardings, releases etc. A lot of daily glue interactions between POs and devs + qas mainly and me as well.  
    
  POS and Product Manager (as their and Olga’s leader) helps to bring requirements to the team, triage bugs and projects, etc.
* - How do you assess and monitor team health?  
  First of all I am responsible for 16 people who report to me, and I have regular 1-on-1 meetings with all of them. I established the schedule for that during my first month, including onboarding 4 of them as they joined recently. These meetings are one of the key moments when I check how they do emotionally and if they have any stress, problems, unresolved issues at work or even outside of work.  
    
  With some of them I have it not so often (the rhythm is set by them, and I respect that). So, I also try to monitor how they are doing during meetings every day and whenever I have a chance. Sometimes I get some concerning updates from HR or someone and then I reach out to the team member to see how he or she is doing.  
    
  So, as team consists of individuals I set my priority #1 to make sure they all doing good individually but then of course I try to observe during the daily interaction how they are doing and trying to help as needed.  
    
  Regarding peers and overall team dynamics and atmosphere I just always try to listen and see if something is off and then react right away to help people resolve it. During last 2 months I did not see anything serious besides couple minor tensions which were resolved. Sometimes it is not public, so my principles are never listening or discussing anything bad about anybody if that body (our buddy) is not here and now with us, and to always encourage those buddies to come together and clear that out.
* - What indicators suggest your team is thriving or struggling?  
    
  Thriving team members in my opinion are obviously more open, full of energy, cooperative and ready to go extra mile if needed. Team can go through tough time and still preserve morals. One of the most important indicators is also presence of blameless culture in action!  
    
  On contrary if the team is struggling, I see more and more member either loosing energy and focus or stressing out too much. Team becomes less effective. Super starts can still do some miracles for a while, but if the whole team not on the same page it does not last long.

Coming back to idea that teams consist of individuals I try to closely monitor every person and help them overcome stress, anxiety or other issues.

## 5. Ownership and Product/Process Monitoring

Define what you own and how you measure its health. Include specific metrics, dashboards, or tools.

* - What is your team responsible for delivering (products, projects, services)?  
    
  Simply speaking our team is responsible for everything besides SC and Desktop App.  
    
  But more closely we are responsible for: Clover, Mobile POS, BB for Indie, Google Reserve, New Mailer (Marketing & AD), NWSS API, Desktop (Indie issues), Global Central (Indie issues).  
    
  Then both us (BB) and SC teams are committing to these: NWMS UI, NW UI, NW API, NBB API. So hard to say for me now, who is responsible. It is kind of us on paper while SC can send more commits to some of those than we do ))  
    
  Finally even worse, while working on our famous “freezers” I was told that there some things, like Auth API for example where nobody really commits much and nobody is responsible for ((
* - How do you measure the health of what you own?  
    
  Very good questions, especially when I am still not sure about who is owing what about every service. But also talking about those we know for sure, like Clover app (basically any mobile app is it is the same app) from what I have seen for now we measure health by amount of bugs reported, then we normally go to logs etc. Recently I started checking logs on daily basis almost (but still did not add it to strict rule). I also heard we have some alert systems but they a noisy. Having been here for relatively short time still I don’t have access to all of them yet. I believe this is an area where I must double check what is in place and useful and then make sure that someone either checking on regular basis or that at least 2 people will receive alert when it is sent. I believe Olga can give more data on that (or Sergey)
* - What dashboards, metrics, or tools do you rely on?  
    
  Lately I started using Azure App Insights for mobile apps. This is the only one I have access to for now. During the latest bug fixes (freezing, blank screens etc) we also relied on Google Analytics which Ilya and other developers were checking on. Downside there is while it gives something real time only, the normal historical logs are becoming available only 24 hours later, while Azure App Insights one are right away.  
    
  Unfortunately besides those 2 I did not even hear (left alone used) any boards ets. Even as simple as health status etc. We talked about it once with Ivan Z and Sergey. Ivan had ideas if I remember correctly, to implement something simple at least. Sergey mentioned that we have something. Also the INFRA team of course have some dashboards for K8 pods etc… I think we should get access to some of those which can give us some idea at glance.

## 6. Challenges and Needs (Optional but Encouraged)

Identify any challenges you're facing and the support you need from leadership. Be specific about blockers, resource needs, or process improvements.  
  
It is optional but most likely this is the one I am mostly capable to fill as a new guy who still have a lot of needs getting into speed, but who also had some challenges already.  
  
I don’t want to take much of your time and we already had a talk or two and see many things more or less the same. So, I will try just to give another bullet point list.

Before I do that I just wanted to mention, even if it sounds cheesy, that I am here not just for money, but I really want to make the team and the product better. I love the company and culture and idea and approach. I will mention below all what I don’t like )) so in this paragraph I want to concentrate on positive. Everyone was super helpful and whenever I need something (and have time to ask for it – this is a key!) I get it fast. Finally, I love to set huge goals and try to accomplish them. It is going to take a lot of time and efforts, but I want our teams to become the best in the world and to ship very stable and cool apps. Let’s go!

Back to needs and challenges business for now:

* Lack of knowledge in a lot of areas still (architecture, monitoring, deployment)
* Not always clear responsibilities set
* Slow transition of some stuff I must pick up and do instead of Project Manager
* Slow learning curve because of too many projects and features in development
* 60% of the time or so during first 50 days spent for production issues mostly
* To high expectations from top management in a short time
* Not always able to slow down or stop other things when I see we must fix PRDMX
* Was not able to communicate the problems to top management effectively yet
* Have lack of mechanisms to get feedback from customers (surveys etc.)
* Have not much of monitoring/ alerting system or access to it
* A lot of code, a lot of docs, but hard to see what is obsolete, what is up to date etc.
* Have some good ideas discussing with Ivan Z but lack time to implement those
* I will repeat one more time, sorry, too many things at the same time!

## 7. Submission Instructions

Please complete this document and submit it to Chad Walters by Tuesday, Dec 3rd. Some team members may be on vacation, which is why we have allowed time until Tuesday. If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to reach out.