Airplane Inspect and Adapt

Created by Pete Deemer, Certified Scrum Trainer, www.goodagile.com
(Inspired by the *XP Game* simulation.)

About This Simulation

- Give people a hands-on experience of using Scrum for inspect and adapt across multiple Sprints.

Duration

- About 1 hour, start to finish

Supplies (per team of 4-6 people)

- 40-50 sheets of scrap paper (A4 size)
- scissors
- bell / gong / noisemaker (for the facilitator)
- timer or wristwatch (for the facilitator)

Printed Materials (per team of 4-6 people)

- tracking_sheet.pdf (1 copy)
- discussion_points.pdf (1 copy)

Preparation

- Define a flight test area, with two markers (such as lines of tape on the floor) separated by 3m. Place it far from the teams if possible.

Simulation Instructions (for the facilitator)

1. Form Teams

Ask people to organize into teams of between 4 and 6 people per team. Request that no team may be more than 1 person larger or smaller than any other team.
[timebox – 30 secs]

(If the teams haven't met the team size request, call attention to this, but don't provide direction; simply pause until they figure it out.)

Call attention to the self-organization that has just taken place.

2. Explain the Scrum Framework

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Show the teams slide 1 in slides.pdf and explain how inspect and adapt of the product and process occurs in the Scrum framework.

3. Explain the Ground Rules
Show the teams slide 2 in slides.pdf and explain the rules of the game.

4. Complete Sprint Planning for Sprint 1
Teams plan Sprint 1, and write their target for Sprint 1 on the tracking sheet.
[timebox – 1 min]

5. Complete Work for Sprint 1
Teams work for 3 minutes, folding and testing airplanes. At the end of the timebox, teams write their actual number of folded and tested airplanes on the tracking sheet.
[timebox – 3 mins]

6. Complete Inspect and Adapt for Sprint 1
Teams discuss the work they just completed, and decide changes to make in their process / way of working for the next Sprint. Discard half-finished or untested planes.
[timebox – 2 mins]

7. Repeat Step 4-6 above for Sprints 2, 3, 4, 5
For Sprint 4, the facilitator sets the target for the teams. Pick a large number – for example, 30 planes; or 3x the Sprint 3 actual. During this Sprint, the facilitator should walk around the teams, applying verbal pressure ("Speed up!" , "Hurry, you'll never finish at this rate!", etc.)

Before Sprint 5, the facilitator should explain that instead of trying to push more work into the system, we're instead going to try to change the system to allow more work to flow through it, by removing constraints. Pick one or two constraints to remove, chosen by the teams (for example, unlimited folds per person, and the addition of a test area closer to the team location)

8. Debrief
Give teams a copy of discussion_points.pdf, and ask them to discuss as a team, then debrief as a group.

9. Taking It Back To Work
Ask each person to take a scrap of paper, and give them 3 minutes to write as many real-world constraints (from their everyday worklife) they can think of. Discuss the observations as a group, and plan actions to take.