

Lesson 6

Building High-Performing Teams

1. Exploring the Scrum Master Role in the SAFe Enterprise
2. Applying SAFe Principles: A Scrum Master's Perspective
3. Exploring Agile and Scrum Anti-Patterns
4. Facilitating Program Execution
5. Improving Flow with Kanban and XP
6. Building High-Performing Teams
7. Improving Program Performance with Inspect and Adapt

SAFe® Course Attending this course gives students access to the SAFe® Advanced Scrum Master exam and related preparation materials.

Learning objectives

- 6.1 Foster collaboration on the team
- 6.2 Facilitate cross-team collaboration
- 6.3 Create forward momentum
- 6.4 Build trust with stakeholders
- 6.5 Develop team skill set
- 6.6 Build an improvement Roadmap

6.1 Foster collaboration on the team

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6.3

Exercise: What's wrong with this team? (if anything...)

Watch the video and discuss as a group 😊



https://youtu.be/zXrcFj_dXdo

PREPARE
3 min

SHARE
2 min

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6.4

Collaboration

Rather than moving in defined, highly structured stages, the real process is born out of the team members' interplay.

—Takeuchi, Nonaka, “The New New Product Development Game”

- ▶ Simply following Scrum (or Lean-Agile) events doesn't make an Agile Team a team
- ▶ Poor collaboration often leads to:
 - Low velocity
 - Poor product quality
 - Low morale, low engagement, lack of commitment, poor working environment, and lack of trust
 - Missed commitments and poor results



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Fostering collaboration

Fostering collaboration is one of the most important tasks of a Scrum Master.

Weak collaboration often exists:

- ▶ Between developers and testers (leads to late testing, poor quality, low velocity)
- ▶ Among developers (technical debt, poor knowledge sharing, too much WIP)
- ▶ Between PO and the rest of the team (unnecessary rework due to misunderstood acceptance criteria, low velocity)
- ▶ With other teams (uncontrolled dependencies, sense of false progress)



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Mob programming

The whole team works on the same Story, at the same time, at the same computer.

In Lean terminology, mob programming instantiates a single-piece flow.



https://youtu.be/p_pvslS4gEI

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6.7

Exercise: Collaboration on your team

- ▶ Consider your actual team environment.
- ▶ What examples of collaboration would be helpful in your environment beyond basic Scrum events?
- ▶ What problems would it solve?



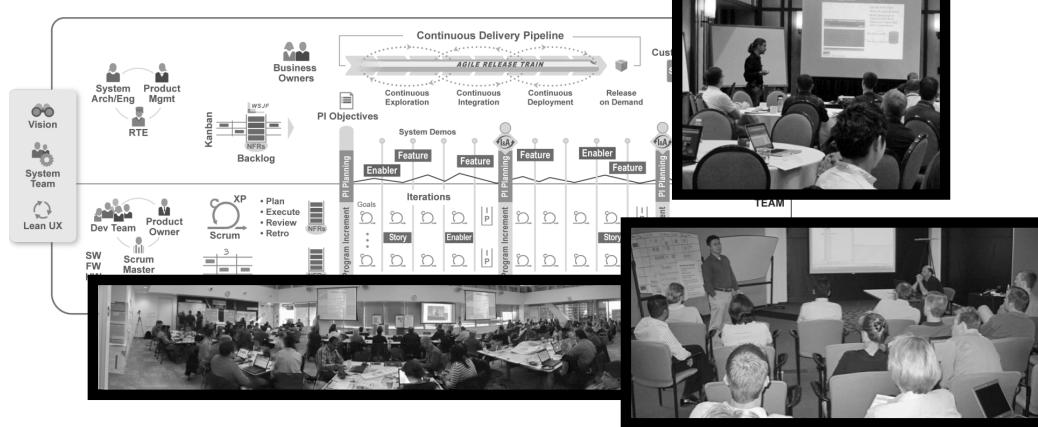
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6.8

6.2 Facilitate cross-team collaboration

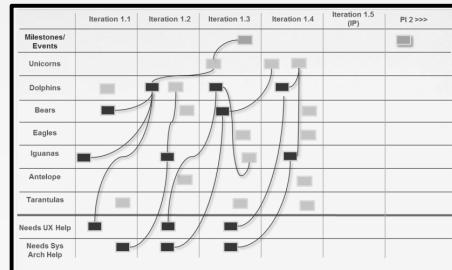
Collaboration across teams is key

Agile Release Trains are built with a goal in mind: to foster team alignment and collaboration.



Exercise: All in one Iteration

- ▶ PI Planning resulted in a bunch of dependencies with other teams, some of which have to be fulfilled in the same Iteration. The first such dependency occurs in Iteration 2.
- ▶ As Iteration 2 approaches, the team feels increasingly uncomfortable about being able to accomplish this critical dependency, because another team has to provide their own part of the functionality first.
- ▶ Brainstorm possible tactics to cope with the problem. Record more than one. In each case, think of pros and cons. Be prepared to share in a ‘gallery walk.’



PREPARE
8 min

SHARE
5 min

6.3 Create forward momentum

What motivates us



<https://youtu.be/u6XAPnuFjJc>

RSA Animate

Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us,
Daniel H. Pink

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6.13

Exercise: What keeps me up at night?

What keeps your team members up at night?
(apart from StackOverflow.com)

Create a shared mission for your team.

- ▶ Make it catchy, pithy, informal
- ▶ Make them care
- ▶ Avoid formal language and long sentences



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6.14

6.4 Build trust with stakeholders

Exercise: Can't run without trust

Agile doesn't work without trust. However, you haven't been able to establish a relationship of trust with Product Management. They require frequent status reports about your team's current Stories. The relationship is clearly broken.

- ▶ What specific activities in SAFe do you think would help you establish trust with these stakeholders?
- ▶ What adjustments (if any) would you make to leverage those activities to build maximum trust?



6.5 Develop team skill set

Help team members develop new skills

Narrow specialization of engineers on the team is not highly supportive of any fluctuations in flow.

- ▶ Consider moving from an I-shaped skill set model to a T- or even E-shaped one
- ▶ T-shaped example: A Java developer can do a bit of DB development and a bit of configuration management, and has rudimentary knowledge in building web UI
- ▶ E-shaped example: A C# developer, who also knows Java very well, is deep into SQL and databases



Exercise: Let's play with letters

- ▶ What opportunities for building T-shaped skill sets would you consider?
- ▶ How would you achieve that?
- ▶ Would you take on building E-shaped skill sets, or is that just too much to accomplish?

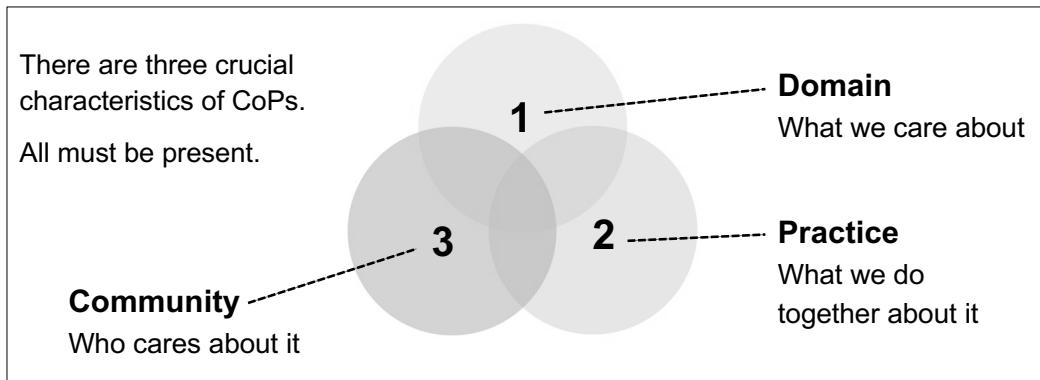
I, T, E?



6.6 Build an improvement Roadmap

What are Communities of Practice?

Communities of Practice (CoPs) are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.¹



¹Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Benefits of CoPs

Benefits to organization 	<p>Short-term value</p> <p>Improve business outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arena for problem-solving• Quick answers to questions• Reduced time and costs• Improved quality of decisions• More perspectives on problems• Coordination/synergy across units <p>Long-term value</p> <p>Develop organizational capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to execute a strategic plan• Credibility with clients• Increased retention of talent• Exploit unplanned capabilities• Enable competitive benchmarking• Leverage advances in technology• Harness the power of social networks	
Benefits to community members 	<p>Improve experience of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help with challenges• Access to expertise• Improved contribution to the team• Increased confidence in approach• Fun of being with colleagues• More meaningful participation• Sense of belonging <p>Foster professional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forum for expanding skills/expertise• Network for staying current• Enhanced professional reputation• Increased marketability• Strong sense of professional identity	

Exercise: Where do you see your team improving in the next PI?

- ▶ Build an improvement Roadmap for your team for the next PI
- ▶ What new practices would you adopt/advance?
- ▶ How could Communities of Practice (CoP) help?
- ▶ How does your Roadmap relate to the team's Definition of Done?



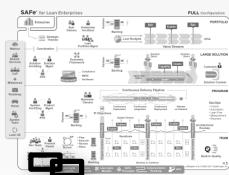
PREPARE
7 min

SHARE
3 min

Lesson summary

In this lesson, you:

- ▶ Identified collaboration issues that impact team performance
- ▶ Examined techniques to improve cross-team collaboration and accelerate performance
- ▶ Explored activities in SAFe that help establish stakeholder trust
- ▶ Reviewed methods for developing team skill sets as part of an improvement roadmap



Suggested Scaled Agile Framework reading:

- “Agile Teams” article
- “Lean-Agile Leaders” article