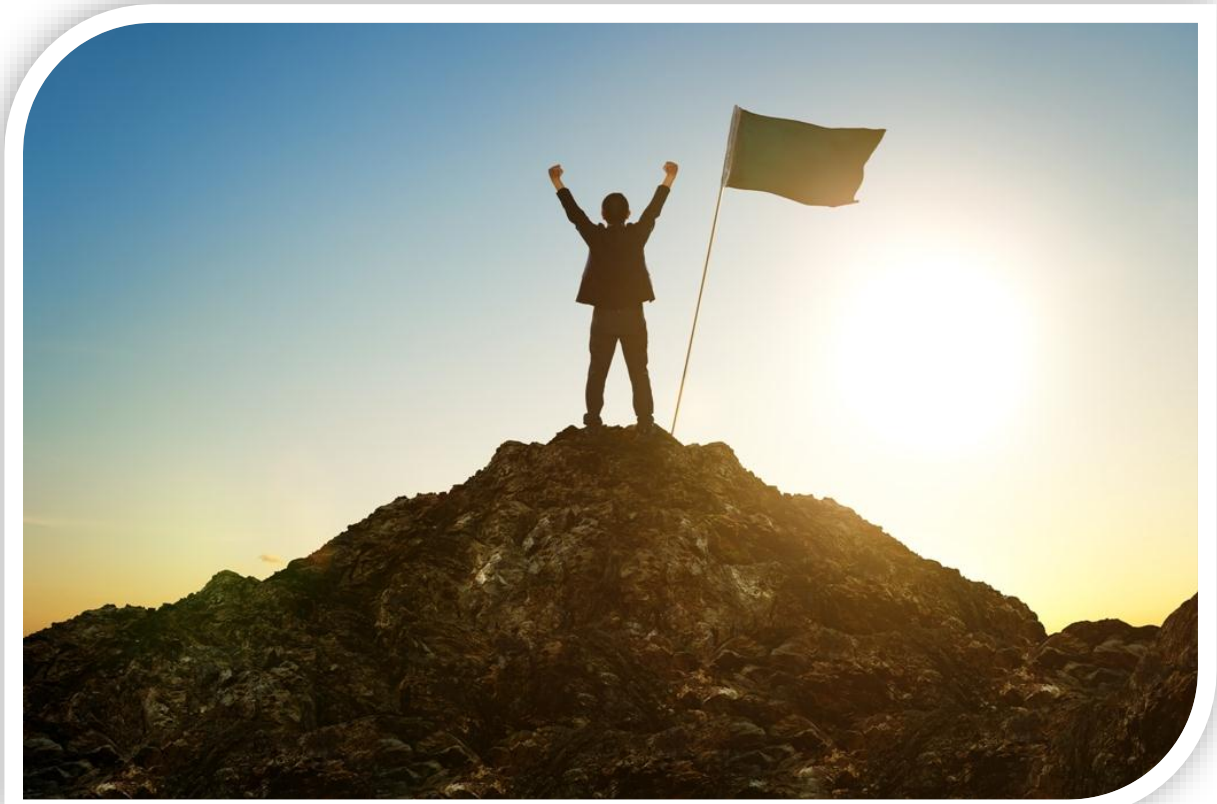


Successful Scrum Adoption



Guidance for Individuals – New Roles

Scrum Master Role

- Scrum Masters during the initial phases of a transition to Scrum clearly understand what removing impediments mean and work toward it without much difficulty.
- The servant leader requirement may cause a few problems for Scrum Masters during initial stages of transition.
- The Scrum Master has no authority over team members, but has authority over the process.
- The Scrum Master exists to help the team with the usage of Scrum.

Attributes of a good Scrum Master

- Let us look at the six attributes of a good Scrum Master.



Responsible

- Scrum Master is responsible for maximizing the throughput of the team.
- Scrum Master also assists the team with adopting and using Scrum.
- A good Scrum Master thrives on responsibility.

Humble

- A humble Scrum Master is willing to do whatever is necessary for the team members to achieve the team's goal.
- He or she recognizes the value in all team members and leads others by example.

Collaborative

- The Scrum Master needs to ensure that a collaborative culture exists within the team.
- Scrum Master needs to ensure that team members can raise issues openly, feel their voice is heard, and are supported.
- During disputes, a good Scrum Master encourages the team to think collaboratively toward finding solutions that benefit all involved.

Committed

- The Scrum Master is fully committed to the project and each sprint's goals.
- Good Scrum Masters don't leave impediments unaddressed for many days.
- If team members feel that impediment resolution progress is slow, they should remind the Scrum Master.
- Scrum Master can demonstrate commitment by staying with the project for the complete duration. It would be disruptive for a team to change its Scrum Master during the project.

Influential

- A good Scrum Master should be able to influence team members and others outside the team.
- Scrum Master may have to convince team members to use Scrum at the beginning and influence them toward usage of technical practices such as pair programming once they are into Scrum.
- In large projects where there are multiple teams, Scrum Master should be able to influence other teams to provide short requirements in line with user stories, not exhaustively documented requirements upfront.

Knowledgeable

- Scrum Masters, by default, are expected to have knowledge and experience in Scrum. Along with knowledge and experience of Scrum, good Scrum Masters may also have additional technical, market, or domain-specific knowledge and experience.
- They should know enough about technical and non-technical skills to be effective with the team.



Tech leads as Scrum Masters

- It may be tempting to nominate Tech leads as Scrum Masters. However, we **do not have** tech lead roles in Scrum.
- Tech leads can be Scrum Masters—there is no restriction. However, careful consideration must be given while selecting Tech Leads as Scrum Masters as:
 - **Tech leads are used to providing direction to team members.**
Team members might still look up to tech leads for direction and tasks to work on. This is not in line with Scrum. Scrum Masters do not take decisions on behalf of the teams. Team members themselves take decisions.
 - **Tech leads may not have enough people management skills.**
Scrum Masters are facilitators who should be able to guide and lead self-organizing teams with no authority.

Internal or External Scrum Masters

- During initial stages of the transition, both internal and external Scrum Masters can be utilized.
- In the long term, usage of external Scrum Masters is not recommended. This will prevent the development of internal Scrum Masters.
- During the initial phases of transition, an outside Scrum Master can mentor internal Scrum Master aspirants.

Scrum Master Rotation

- It is better not to rotate the Scrum Master role during the project.
- Rotation might be required to create a learning opportunity. If team members have difficulty in following Scrum, the Scrum Master role can be rotated across team members so that each team member gets good insight into Scrum and becomes comfortable.
- Scrum Master rotation has the following problems:
 - Someone who is now Scrum Master due to rotation might have other tasks to do. He/she may prefer those tasks over Scrum Master tasks
 - Due to rotation, many people may not get trained
 - Some people may use this opportunity to play the role of Scrum Master and push through some changes
 - Due to short duration as Scrum Master, individuals who play the role of the Scrum Master might think that the role is not valuable

Overcoming common problems

- When making sure that each team has an appropriate Scrum Master, the following common problems may arise.



Someone inappropriate takes the role

- A team might have a Scrum Master who is inappropriate for that role.
- An inappropriate Scrum Master must be changed as quickly as possible.
- What you do depends on your role as given here:
 - If you have some authority over the inappropriate Scrum Master and team (if you are Delivery Manager, Program Manager, PMO Authority, etc.) you can meet the person playing that role and explain why someone else must take over. You can also give pointers to work on so he/she may be considered later. If required, you may also remove that person from that role.
 - If you have no authority over the inappropriate Scrum Master, team and process, still you can initiate a conversation with that person, keeping the team's best interests in mind. You can also suggest that the inappropriate Scrum Master step down.

The Scrum Master is also a programmer/tester/other on the team

- When in a situation where a dedicated Scrum Master can't be allocated to a team, a programmer or tester on the team may have to take on the role of Scrum Master.
- Having a Scrum Master who might also be a programmer or tester carries high risks:
 - The Scrum Master may not have enough time to devote to both roles.
 - Scrum Master activities consume time. This may prevent him/her from working on his/her tasks. This may impact the critical path activities of the project.
 - Other team members may not know whom they are talking to—Scrum Master or Programmer/Tester/<another role>.
 - Scrum Master will have less control over external influencers and outsiders.
- Being aware of these issues and a willingness to work through them may be the best solution in these cases.

The Scrum Master is making decisions for the team

- This situation could arise due to two reasons:
 - Scrum Master has misunderstood the role
 - Team is used to taking orders and letting others make decisions
- This Scrum Master should be taken aside and reminded about the role of Scrum Master, which is to provide guidance and not order team members or make decisions.

