

AGILE EXPLORERS

Exploring Agility in the Enterprise

Program Updates

A new Agile Explorers library branch has opened on WT 5A in cube 304. Please check it out and just leave a post-it note if you decide to check out a book. Although, it does not contain all the titles, just let us know your request and we'll get it to you.

A Project Recommendation Model (Agile, Waterfall, Iterative/Hybrid) has been drafted by the Enterprise Architecture group based on feedback from an EA&P-led workshop in December. It is expected to be sent out across the IT PMO within the week to further refine.

Conversations are continuing with Facilities Management (FM) on conceptual workspace designs for Signal Place 3. Design goals include improving privacy and focus options, more opportunities to collaborate, and increasing flexibility in floor reconfiguration. If approved, these changes would be incorporated into the ceiling and lighting project scheduled to begin for SP3 in April 2015.

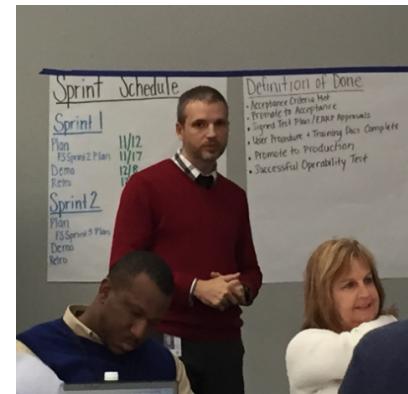


...Notes from the Field...

In late October, the Financial Solutions department of Enterprise Solution Delivery participated in SAFe ScrumXP training. The following experience report is Jordan Headrick and Amanda Judge's assessment of the past several months. As you read it, please take this as an

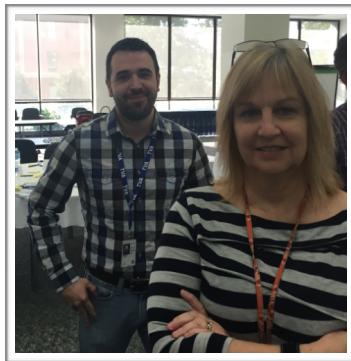
opportunity to reflect on your own team's challenges, experiences, and improvement efforts underway. TVA and our business partners benefit from us sharing our learning and becoming more transparent with our work. I welcome you to share your experience in this newsletter and other avenues regularly.

Thank you Jordan and Amanda*! (continued....)



Continued: Notes from the Field

We have just finished our first sprint and we're almost at the end of the second. The Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) has had a big impact on the team. It has made our work more efficient and allowed cross training through pair programming. Agile has given us more insight of what tasks the team is actively working on. We are more focused on delivering the most important things to the business and following through with our commitments made during sprint planning.



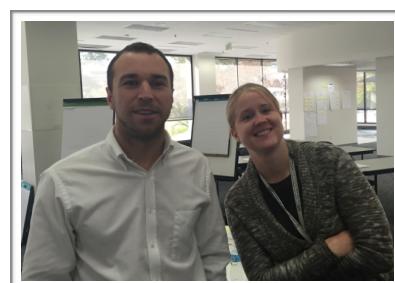
What we like most as a team is the cross training aspect. Cross training is absolutely essential for us as a team to succeed and remove the single point of failure. If the subject matter expert (SME) is out, the work can still get done. We have learned that cross training will not happen if it is not supported by the team, management, and the business. For example, if we resort back to the old way of doing business, team members would be overloaded with requests from business partners



Additionally we like the concept of eliminating task switching. Task switching makes it difficult to complete the task at hand because you are not able to focus on it. It takes a while for someone to adjust, gather their thoughts and be ready to focus



on a new task. If the team continues to allow task switching, majority of the time will be wasted on transition, not the work. It has been eliminated by SAFe because the business goes directly to the product owner Star Warren, with their needs, instead of the developers. The business and the product owner then work together to put the tasks in order by what is most important and time critical, and the developers work on those items based on their sprint capacity.



All of the added meetings would be something that the team and our business partners can agree sticks out the most. The meetings are beneficial because we get a lot of questions answered and have a better understanding of what the business is asking for. It also gives everyone, the team and the business, a chance to see what work is going on. We are changing our culture by breaking down the silos and opening up communication. Some team members

Continued: Notes from the Field

As a team, we would like to make a future improvement to add more visibility of the upstream list of work from the business. Knowing what the business has in store may allow us to be able to come up with more efficient ways to solve the same problem. An idea would be to allocate time to meet with business partners to discuss upcoming enhancements, so the developers could brainstorm design work early on.

Another improvement area is how we are doing estimations during sprint planning. We are currently estimating “the unknown” with some tasks and the business is starting to question our story point estimations. For example, some developers may not be familiar with an application hence the story points estimation is higher than the developer doing the work on a daily basis. As currently implemented, we have to reach consensus on a set number of story points. Maybe a solution would be that only the developers familiar with the code language or application should estimate.

Overall, SAFe has been a great change for our team. We have been able to meet or exceed our goals every time. The team has been able to focus on certain enhancements and get them completed more quickly without feeling overwhelmed with all of the work that the business needs us to complete.

As a team we had some fun and enjoyed the journey of becoming faster, leaner, and higher performing.

**As a closing note: At the beginning of the calendar year, Amanda started a new job at Duke University. We wish her the best on her new endeavor!*

PIs & ARTs

In the Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe), a Program Increment (PI) is a period of time in which feature-level business value is delivered. For TVA, a repeated cadence has been developed to approximately encompass a fiscal year. The cadence for TVA's PI's for the next 3 fiscal years can be found [here](#). It represents a 10 / 12 / 10 / 10 / 10 week schedule where the twelve week PI contains the Christmas and New Year holidays. This allows PI planning to occur before the holiday and ensures that personnel's expected annual leave is incorporated.

Currently, two Agile Release Trains (ARTs) are in their formulation stages being led by RTEs Jose Rodriguez and Keith Davis. It is expected that they will start their PI in early March, also known as PI 15.3, representing FY and increment number of the PI.

FY2015											
Fiscal Year Calendar											
October '14				November '14				December '14			
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