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# "Scrum Master or Arm-chair Psychologist" By Angela Johnson

## Premise

New ScrumMasters tend to focus on the perceived administration they see in Scrum: facilitating a sprint planning ceremony or a retrospective, for instance. But what tends to get overlooked is the “people stuff.” Questions from ScrumMasters embracing their new role include:

“My team is sticking to their old roles. How do I get them to work together?” “Nobody updates our information radiators. How do I get people to do this?”

These are not truly “Scrum” problems but, rather, are people problems. Ah, enter the armchair psychologist now known as ScrumMaster. How do you get people to do anything? This is more art than science, and it requires ScrumMasters to be willing to roll up their sleeves and engage in active facilitation. This webinar will focus on practical tips to help any ScrumMaster tackle the greater task of improving teamwork.

## Presenter

Angela Johnson

## Learnings

- Get book - Dale Carnegie - How to Win Friends and Influence People. How to interact to people. Full list of Dale Carnegie principles - find these.
- Get book - Dr Harvey Robins - The new “why teams don't work”. Business psychologist. Find out more.
- Add some of this to my [How to Work Personality Issues Without Sounding Like a Marriage Guidance Counsellor?](#) pitch. People. Simple data.

## Materials

[scrummasterorarm-chairpsychologistwebinarwithangelajohnson.pdf](#)

# Notes

Facilitator - actively managing conversation  
Neutral role - doesn't need to be expert in product, development etc

Focus on outcomes

Don't need outside agile coaches, as have built in scrum masters

Scrum master is not a secretary. If you take notes for team you are taking away from the team  
Coach in new techniques SM shouldn't be bottleneck

Have you read the Scrum Guide?

New SM latch on to the perceived mechanics But overlook the people aspect of the job  
Help people work together to deliver more value

People issues will be exposed very quickly

Do we have a scrum problem, or a people problem

Often mean we must be more armchair psychologist than anything else  
Get people skills

Michael James - The Scrum Master checklist. 8 pages long.

Dale Carnegie - How to Win Friends and Influence People. How to interact to people. Full list of Dale Carnegie principles - find these.

Dr Harvey Robins - The new "why teams don't work". Business psychologist.

Poor teams are vague about objectives. Best teams 30 day or less goals / segments. Poor teams unable to see barriers. Best teams identify barriers at many levels (people, process, structural) and development plans these  
Poor teams don't know about each other. Best teams value differences in one another, and develop versatility plans to leverage these.

Help make versatility plans. Ask team mates what they experience.

Personal styles Analytical - like the how Drivers - what are we trying to do. Now / present Expressive - why we are doing what we do. Future oriented Amiable - who are these for. Relationship people.

Identify quadrants for team / team mates Develop plans on how to interact. Compromise on style.

Does and don't for dealing with dominate type.

How does understanding these styles help me with presentations and coaching. Eg with drivers, get to facts, don't ask rhetorical questions etc. Eg with expressive invite them to share. Dont legislate, etc. Not dogmatic Eg with amiable, start with personal story, not too abrupt, not offer guarantees we cannot

deliver

How to build trust Common goals Support other team members - succeed as a team, we fail as a team

You can't listen once you are talking - ok, to ask questions Humans like working with other humans  
Cannot motivate someone else - create environment for self-motivation Idea - tell people how to interpret what you are about to say Idea - explain our tone (eg just had baby effecting work as not getting any sleep) Also seeing more cultural sensitivity.

Why do people think scrum master can service multiple teams Goal is not to do the work the way we've always done it but to do the work using scrum - a new way of working If goal of new way of working is to produce faster etc, then need to support it in the new way. Part of SM role is to be teacher

Scrum started in 1993 in easel org. Written in 1995. Been around for 20 years Not new

Scrum is not a methodology based on temporary assignment To this we need these roles fulfilled

Very inefficient to have work in two different ways

Avoid "that's not agile, not scrum" etc go for what problem are we trying to solve.

High performance teams do not say "we are high performing, we don't need to improve". If this were true, and the sports team one the grand final last year, does this mean they don't need to improve to win again?

Always need SM. Part of this is neutral role. If team is getting complacent with current SM perhaps rotate.

[Webinar](#), [Role](#), [ScrumMaster](#), [Great](#), [Video](#), [Learning](#)

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