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Mike Cohn - Let Go Of Knowing

Premise

You undoubtedly have a firmly held set of convictions about what is necessary to do agile well. These convictions have served you well—your teams have delivered better products more quickly and more economically than before they were agile. But could some of your firmly held convictions be holding you back? And have you ever wondered why some of your most agile friends are similarly firm in their own opinions—even ones that are the exact opposite of your own?

In this session, you'll see ways that biases may be preventing you from questioning your assumptions, why being open to new views is hard but vital, and why beginners so often think they know it all.

After this session, you will know how to discern the inviolate rules of Scrum from its merely good practices. You'll know why you feel certain of some aspects of agile, less so about others. You'll leave with the confidence to let go of knowing. And when we let go of knowing, we open ourselves to learning, which is the heart of agile.

Summary

- Content rating (0-no new ideas, 5 - a new ideas/approach, 9-new ideas): 7
- Style rating (0-average presentstion, 5 - my level, 9-I learned something about presenting): 5

Action / Learning

Presentation

Notes

Pre Keynote Administrivia

Manny Gonzales - new CEO of the Scrum Alliance, started 7 days ago

Social . #sgphx @scrumalliance Fb.com/scrum alliance

700 people

Co-chairs of the conference Daniel Gullo Stephen Forte

4 keynotes Includes pechakucha (pet cha ku cha) 20 slides in 20 secs auto advance Includes Ignite talks - submit, vote, 10 minute session, submit / vote

Idea: Setting up and running an internal Scrum conference

49 sessions total

Thursday is Open Space day

Opening this morning Write down passion issue Email path On paper Scrunch up and throw Email person on their question / passion Good idea for kickoff session

Themes Beginner - 6-12 month Intermediate - 1-2 years Expert - 2+

Selfie contests - daily announcement . #sgphx / @scrumalliance

Keynote

How holding onto your views may be holding you back

Agile is about experiment Have a best guess Sometimes they don't work out

Estimating experiment 20-25 teams Different estimating approaches Came up with approaches - task decomposition, parametric estimation, story points, ideal days 2-3 month project length Select next project approach Had to be different Ran 2 years

One approach Experienced senior programmer (esp) days Estimate as if you were a senior programmers Help normalize ideal days Each team member estimates senior Then normalize Worked work for 1 team but these were all senior programmers Harder to estimate what mythical senior programmer would take

Coalesce around some ideas Some fell off - Parametrics modeling (no easier on estimates), task decomposition (too long)

Started settle on ideal days, story points Then work on details Numbers Be optimistic, be pessimistic How meeting was done Check list of 12 magic questions

We can now see where we ended up

But when we began the experiment we didn't know But learned enough to write a book Pg 238-40 are wrong in agile estimating and planning

Had fierce debates But didn't get in the way of our ability to learn

Open minded - willing to consider new ideas That's all we needed

Approach scrum with an open mind Go into situation knowing you are right, but also know that you could be wrong

What was the last big change Once firmly believe that you now don't believe is true Eg include product owner in retrospective, 4 week sprints

I could be wrong

Ron Jeffries - don't bother Ken Rubin - scrum master can be partly - some teams don't need daily scrum Bob Martin - sceptic about tdd Ken Schwaber - enough chairs at daily scrum Henrick kniberg - now believe sm can work with up to 3 teams, sometimes it's right to switch team members

Scrum started as “waterfall-butt”? We do waterfall but we test all the time, or integrate weekly

“I could be wrong” different to “I was wrong” Husband - the vastness of my wrongness was staggering

Action: look for video

Early scrum had no retrospective “Why in the world would I wait until the end of the sprint to know how we improve” Team members didn't do this Therefore better off setting time aside at the end of the sprint

We can be opinionated But we have to be open minded

Frank Zappa - “a mind I'd like a parachute. It doesn't work if it's not open”

#icouldbewrong

How can make sure our minds are open

Questions your assumptions Dad - “make it warmer” - what does this mean Make it closer to the state I call warm

Box puzzle single line through $100 if you can solve Tried for 12 years Seven bridges of konigsberg Euler proved it cannot be solved Assumptions was my loving father would give me a problem that was solvable

Two reasons

Confirmation bias Convinces us something we believe is true

Hindsight bias Makes us forget how ignorant we once were If you are a writer, this success

For example Today I believe We have tasks, but we don't pre-assigned Wrote that they are pre-assigned on leaving sprint planning meeting Had forgotten that he didn't believe today's believe always

Exhibit intellectual humility

John Stewart mill. Virtue to imagine one of your fundamental beliefs is false

I believe sprints are a good thing But no science

Difference between what we know and what we believe

Pause, think about it Don't rush to answer the question

Leo Strauss Always assume there is someone in the class that knows more than you do

What about the horrible singer on TV shows Dunning-Kruger effect

The less we know about the subject, the less we think there is to know

ComparitiveAgility.com Assess themselves Respond self-assess

Managers set goals but doesn't tell team members how to get it Seven dimensions Eg quality - PO involved, tests automated, testers involved early

Look at 6 months and 2 years in Appear to have gotten worse at produce quality But teams have gotten worse Example of dunning Kroger effect Now the team knows more they think they are worse - we have a long way to go.

Avoid brand loyalty Cannot get too attached to any one brand of agile

Ron Jeffries - Scrum vs XP “I'll drop mine, if you'll drop yours”

I'll take an idea from wherever we can get it

Let's go back to calling it software development

Don't need to waste time questioning everything - we can take some things as given / rules Sprints no longer than month Be done with something by end of sprint Meet at start of the sprint to discuss what you are going to do

Action: Find out about agile atlas

Quote: “There are no rules here - we're trying to accomplish something”. Thomas Edison

Common Practices in scrum Tdd Definition of done Product backlog requirement User stories Pair programming

Big and small Don't start sprints on Mondays - schedule dentist appointment on Mondays

Sprint 0 - gasp

Task board

Some are more important than others

I am he worlds greatest scrum master - wouldn't say that “Never heard of pair programming” - not greatest scrum master, greatest would have opinion about them

We are past the point of individual practices as the issues Debates are on groups of practices in certain situation

Add “agile” to Carl Sagan's list That's a good argument. My position is mistaken … I cannot recall the last time something like that happened in politics or religion.

Let go of knowing Be open to experimentation.

Experimentation, Culture, Conference, Keynote

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