

JAYNE GROLL, ITSM ACADEMY

Q: Will the Agile Service Management class be offered Virtually?

A: Yes.

Q: Question from twitter: Agile and Scrum, what about Lean?

A: While Agile and Scrum are the prime elements of Agile Service Management, identifying and eliminating waste through Lean methods will also be essential. We'll be offering Lean IT courses next year.

Q: We use the Agile concept of Min Viable Process for Service Management, the rest of the team has taken a liking to this concept [Agile].

A: Absolutely. Minimal viable process is the "just enough" aspect of being agile. It applies equally to Service Management as Application Development.

Q: It sounds like Scrum will work well in a multi-team scenario. What if only one or two people are supposed to do requirements gathering, develop a product and do communication, stakeholder management, complete all activities. How do you do apply Scrum in that scenario ? What would be sprint 1 and 2 for such a scenario ?

A: Jayne: Scrum only has 3 roles. Product Owner, ScrumMaster and Team. While Scrum recommends scrum teams of more than three but less than nine, a team of two is possible.
Lisa: I'm a proud member of a 2 person scrum team, and two things I learned: be realistic about your deliverable products. We started with big ideas, and cut it down. The second secret is to do the debrief. Looked at all of scrum, and decided we had to be lean. Broke it down to realistic products and small debriefs, we really started rocking.

Q: Can Agile be applied to all sizes of projects? small to Large? Is there any case where Agile cannot be applied to?

A: Agile can be applied to any size of project. In theory, there is not a project where Agile cannot be applied. However you divide the backlog of work, each sprint moves a project forward. The trick is to have a short feedback loop to get on top of issues quicker in bigger projects.

Q: We are just starting Service Management with ServiceNow and this seems to involve processes, procedures, tools, etc. So how can we integrate Agile SM early in the process?

A: This is a great place to start, as you can start build agile into service management from the beginning. Process design and tool implementation projects are perfect examples of how to use Scrum methods for moving a project forward. Each sprint could address one activity of a process including the tooling, procedures, communication plans, etc.

Q: In a typical Agile Service Management model, do break/fix issues with software generally get included in the model, or would this primarily be used for new projects/development/enhancements?

A: Every service management process can be made more agile by considering the original values of the Agile Manifesto and applying "just enough" process where necessary. Break/fix would become part of an Agile Incident Management process and hopefully streamlines the activity to expedite the ability to meet customer requirements.

Q: For support teams focused on and comfortable with crunching tickets, are there ideas that could be incorporated from agile in order to draw out proactive ideas.

A: As I said before, I think it is important to analyze each process to identify ways to make it more agile. Is ticket crunching celebrated? What is the velocity of the individual support members and overall team. What are their impediments?

Q: Regarding organization of a project, how can one effectively organize project sprints so as to roll efforts to products without creating confusion, duplication or unnecessary work? I find that the sprints are a bit disorganized on the project that I am participating in. Any advice?

A: There is a misbelief that Scrum and Project Management are not compatible. That is not true. The ScrumMaster is not a project manager. The role is intended to focus the team and remove impediments. The Project Manager has the broader vision and responsibility for managing the entire project. I think disorganization is a direct result of mistaking the ScrumMaster or Product Owner for the Project Manager. Agile is more of a project execution than a project management technique.

Q: Might you comment on the value of "uncertainty" when selecting Agile vs. Waterfall? It seems that Uncertainty is one of the largest drivers of Agile

A: Not sure what you mean by uncertainty. Waterfall is very structured and has specific steps along the way. The challenge with waterfall is that the feedback loops take a long time to get to, and it's difficult to come back up the waterfall. There may be some very complex projects that would still benefit from a waterfall approach if the concept of self-organizing teams is too loose for the type of project.

Q: How do External IT Auditors react to Agile?

A: Great question. Honestly, don't know the answer to this or what evidence auditors would require. I would suggest meeting with the auditors and getting clarification before beginning an Agile or Agile Service Management program.