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Working with Hybrid Teams

Your Guide:
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Agenda

- Introduction
- What are hybrid teams and why should we care?
- Begin at the End: How we work at Clarity
- The fundamental premise of Agile
- Blending the two types of work
- Flow is a fancy way of saying "Service Desk"
- Two Key Roles: Program Manager & RTE
- What about "Shared Services"?
- The value of Big Room Planning (BRP) ceremonies for hybrid teams
- Finally: Don't let "Perfection" stand in the way of "Good Enough"
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Introductions

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Introductions

- Take 5 Minutes

- Turn to a Person Near You

- Introduce Yourself

- Business Cards

What are hybrid teams and why should we care?

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Not everything is agile…

- Companies like to talk about going "all agile"

- Most efforts, however, actually have agile and traditional components

- Thus, you will need to have multiple delivery methodologies for different delivery groups

- A *hybrid team* is one that has some people that deliver in an agile manner while others focus on a more traditional time-based delivery

Begin at the End:
How we work at Clarity

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Clarity is delivered by a hybrid team
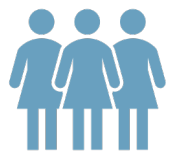
- Features are delivered in an agile fashion with scope varying between releases
    - Release Train Engineer is responsible for enforcing agile ceremonies
    - Engineering delivers in 6 ½ sprints (13 weeks) over each quarter
- The release itself is delivered in a traditional waterfall manner on set dates
    - Program Manager is responsible for ensuring the time-based milestones are met
        - Big Room Planning
        - Release Planning
    - Product Management & the Program Manager prepare each release
        - Planning activities in the 6 weeks prior to the quarter
        - Packaging activities in the 3 weeks at the end of each quarter
            - Marketing, Legal, Product Analysts (for SKU management)

The fundamental premise of Agile

Agile is for work with significant unknowns

- Agile methodologies are intended for situations where you learn as you go

- Software development naturally lends itself to an agile methodology
  - You don't really know what you want (or don't want) until you see it

- Because scope is indeterminate, cost & schedule are held fixed to provide structure/predictability

- If you know what you need to do and the sequence to do it
  - Traditional methodologies are better and more appropriate

Blending the two types of work

Traditional wrappers around agile

- Typically, there is an agile "engine" that generates product
    - The trick is that you don't know the exact scope of delivery until the end of a cycle

- Wrapped by a traditional packaging wrapper that hits particular dates
    - The release/launch always occurs on a specific date
    - Milestones are established working backward from that date

- Some functions may use a Kanban/flow based model

Flow is a fancy way of saying "Service Desk"

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Flow = Queue Management

- Optimizing "Flow" is about maximizing velocity through the queue
  - Functions such as marketing often will have SLAs on items that enter their queue
  - SLAs are a traditional, not an agile, concept

- If you have enough supply to meet demand, then FIFO works just fine.

- If you **don't**
  - You'll typically want a <u>product manager</u> or some other role to prioritize the queue

Two Key Roles:
Program Manager & RTE

One role for product, one role for engineering

- Program Manager
  - Typically tied into Product Management
  - Responsible for coordinating completion of activities/milestones by deadline

- Release Train Engineer
  - Typically tied into Engineering
  - Responsible for compliance with agile policies & procedures
  - In our case, also involved with defect prioritization & delivery

What about "Shared Services"?

Shared Services are basically vendors

- Similar to the flow conversation above
  - If supply exceeds demand, then a simple FIFO queue will suffice
    - SLAs provide predictability over when something will be delivered
  - If demand exceeds supply (or delivery is agile), then things get more complicated

- For the 2nd situation
  - Each Shared Service needs to have a roadmap that indicates what they expect to deliver or resolve when
  - All stakeholders that leverage the Shared Service should have the opportunity to review and comment on the roadmap/impacts that it will have
  - Product Management for the Shared Service needs to work with each stakeholder group to prioritize items for delivery

The value of Big Room Planning (BRP) ceremonies for hybrid teams

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Never assume people know what you know

- We all tend to focus on our respective roles

- BRP provides an opportunity for everyone across all functions to hear the same message and get on the same page

- Note that NOT all planning has to occur during the BRP event
  - We conduct planning for 6 weeks leading up to our BRP event
  - Our BRP event is only ~90 minutes with teams reading out their plan for the cycle

Finally:
Don't let "Perfection" stand in the way of "Good Enough"

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Your hybrid teams process will evolve

- Example: We started off with 2 day in-person BRP sessions
  - Over time, the teams themselves voted for a remote 90 minute readout
- Example: We originally had a number of folks that were all responsible for tracking individual milestones in our release process
  - Over time, we realized having a single Program Manager track all of it was much more efficient and effective
- Some work that was "agilized" was returned to a more traditional delivery once it was realized that an iterative methodology was not appropriate

- <u>Don't insist on a "perfect" process. Just get started and improve as you go.</u>

Questions?

Surveys

Please take a few moments to fill out the class survey.
Your feedback is extremely important for future events.