The Manager’s Role in Scrum

Scrum Gathering
Nov 14, 2007
<intro>
Who am I?
Henrik Kniberg - Crisp AB
Java & agile software development

CTO of Goyada (mobile services & ecommerce)
30 developers

CTO of Epicent (mobile services)
4 developers

CTO of Tain (gaming)
40 developers

... and 2 kids to “manage”...

Henrik Kniberg
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Why is the manager’s role important?

The middle manager can be...
- the **best catalyst**
- the **worst impediment**

If he doesn’t understand his role within Scrum... which type do you think he will become?

So what IS my role then?
What is a manager? (according to various sources on the Internet)

**Management:**
The art, or science, of achieving goals through people

**Leadership:**
The ability to affect human behavior so as to accomplish a mission designated by the leader

**Supervision:**
Literally - *looking over.* Making sure people do what they are supposed to do

- Management has to do with power by position, whereas leadership involves power by influence
- Resources = people, money, things

... and what do they actually do?

- Mentor
- Plan
- Organize
- Coordinate
- Control
- Improve

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A sample Scrum company

Scrum Modeling Language (ScrUML)
(inofficial Scrum Modeling Language)
Let’s grow it a bit...
And let’s grow it a bit more...
And let’s improve it.
The manager’s role in Scrum

Some ideas on what a manager should be doing in a Scrum company

Based on

- **Personal experience**
  - 8 years as middle-manager at 3 agile companies
  - 1 year as agile coach helping many other managers

- **Books & forums**
- **Discussions with peers**
- **Feedback from Scrum veterans**
  - Mike Cohn, Ken Schwaber, Jeff Sutherland

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The manager could be...

Change agent / bootstrapper / organization builder

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!
Role placeholder

The manager could be...

Handle resource conflicts
Buy snacks
Synchronize multiple product backlogs
Synchronize multiple teams
Solve high-level impediments
Find strategic partners
What isn’t getting done around here?
OK, I’ll do it for now!
Does this really need to be done at all?
Am I the right person?
Who should be doing it?

Salary negotiation
Recruitment
Clean the office
Coach the scrum masters
Tech evangelist

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If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!

Does this really need to be done at all?
Am I the right person?
Who should be doing it?
The manager could be...

Chief Product Owner

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!
The manager could be...

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!

Resource broker
The manager could be...

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!

Coordinator / Bridge builder

CTO / Dev Mgr

Scrum of Scrums

CM group

Test group

DB group

PO

Product A

PO

Product B

Scrum Team A

Scrum Team B1

Scrum Team B2

SM

PO

PO
Oil / firefighter / process coach

The manager could be...

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!

Team isn’t listening to me!

Product owner’s priorities are wrong!

The releases aren’t working!
The manager could be...

Waste & constraint hunter

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!

Goal

Problem

Solution

1. Slow down

2. Fix bottleneck

3. Fix next
The manager could be...

**Gardener / motivator**

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!
Kaizen fuel / impediment fixer / servant leader

The manager could be...

- CEO
- Development manager
- Product manager
- Operations manager

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!
The manager could be...

**Protector**

If it’s nobody else... It’s YOU!
The Bottom Line

- You, the manager, are critically important.
- That’s a problem.
- Try to make yourself redundant.
- You’ll probably never get there.
- But each step is an improvement.

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Extra slides...

(brought up during the Q&A session)
Technical debt

- Code duplication
- Test coverage
- Code readability

**Definition of Done**
- .... BLA BLA ....
- **No increased technical debt**

Henrik Kniberg
## Velocity calibration

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