Roundtable Discussion Take-Aways
ProjectSummit*BAWorld Boston 2018

How to do Agile when your organization and/or a business partner does Waterfall?

-Commitment from leadership

-Educate the team and business partners

-Communicate benefits

-Small targeted projects for quickness

-upfront, clear expectations both internally and with vendors

-Experts for training

- Integrate tools/aspects slowly

      -stand ups

      -user stones

-Training before starting

-Mgt champion support

What I learned from my biggest failure

-Make new mistakes; identify "lessons learned" from each failure

-Contribute to an env. of trust, comm. and "psych safety"

-Failures are inevitable; mistakes will happen, own them when they do

-Use the 5 "whys" to understand what users truly need vs want they want. Identify what you could vs could not compromise

-Be courageous; know when you should recommend "calling it quits" on a project or product that won't add value

-Recognize that you don't have to be good at everything! Focus on strength while working to improve weakness

-Failure won't kill you; it's never as bad as you think it is!

-Take time to collect yourself; don't visibly freak out!

-Ask good open-ended questions on the front end. Ask WHY, why are we doing this? What are target outcome? Tell me what success looks like?

-Always trust but verify

How do you best manage and collaborate with virtual teams? What tips and tools can you recommend?

-Understand other cultures

-Zoom – video conferences are essential

-Take time to learn personal stuff

-Despise Skype

-Cisco WebEx functionally that tracks "screen time" (might be in their training tool)

-Minutes being taken on screen as meeting occurs

-Alternate time for meetings when different time zones so not always inconvenient for same person

-Building a relationship "remote coffee" via videos

-Understanding culture and what is important

-Collaboration / virtual boards, camera on white board

Certification – do we really need it?

-If you are changing industry or job, you need it

-Want to learn new tips/techniques certifications can help

-If company incentives certification then you want it

-Open up more job opportunities

-Is not an indication if you are a good or bad PM or BA

-Shows you are committed to the profession

-Proves a good foundation

-For career progress, it is a measurable criteria

-Must have for a new job, marketable skill

Juggling multiple projects and conflicting priorities

-"the end of the world" syndrome. Priority 1 is perspective driven – deadlines, who is yelling, timing

-Resources – shared resources can be used when everyone knows what is most urgent

-What we can do?

      -escalate

      -add resources

      -negotiate

      -manage scope

-Have a method to list all project and requests

      -a repeat capable process

-Need to install a governance process to set priority

-Use objective KPI's to set priority and be aware that subjective influences happen (importance or who asked)

-Switch tasking or multi-tasking. Giving 100% to each item

-Priority setting by a selected characteristive – timing, cost, who asked?

-Recourse of a large list

      -delegate

      -get more info

What is the impact on a Project Team when the PM is overbearing? What techniques do you use to deal?

-PM doesn't listen

-Project expectations not clear

-Techniques 260 reviews and provide honest feedback. Determine if cultural differences is causing behavior

Would have expected this topic to be a BA topic unless you manage PMs

-Team only tells you what you want to hear – don't want to deal with you

-Do things you are told to do, no more and no less, negative impact to project

-Appearance of managing by intimidation and threat – impact team dynamics and performance

-Techniques

      -redirect behavior

      -coaching and mentoring

      -360 reviews on PM's

-Team one tells you what you want to hear, don't want to deal with you

-Not effective team

-Division in project team, do things because told to do it

-Issues in private life

-Don't see successful project

-Cannot clearly agree on expectations

-Creates noise in office space

-May have culture differences

Tools you can afford on your own when your company won't budget for them.

-Talked about using existing tools to the full capacity (like Microsoft Suite). Suggested getting VBA scripting knowledge through books

-Create your own tools/templates through communal creations

-If company won't pay for tools, then ask them to allocate time to create your own or gain experience in what you have

-Talked about non-profit companies can request free access from a lot of tool companies

-Tools; yahoo, skype, google drive, smart sheet, open source, xmind

-App store

-Microsoft 365 teams (if company has it already and on cloud)

-Create ROI to convince company to buy tool(s) that you need

How do you grow from being a PM to a Program Manager?

-learning the wholestic view "Big picture"

-Risk Management- manage across program not @ project live

-Strategies ability and thought process – outside the box

-Exposure develop cross functional expertise and communication

-Forward thinking

-Get more cross functional view

-Grow into; learn/training mentorship

-Enjoying what we do, exposure across organizational towers

How do you subtly train a Project Sponsor on how to be an effective Project Sponsor?

-Influence both directly and indirectly to increase the engagement level of the sponsor

-Set expectations at the beginning of the project.

-Use steering committee to guide the sponsor to the correct decisions

-Understand what motivates the sponsor to participate activity

-Use the nuclear option to escalate up the chain until the sponsor refuses to meet agreed expectations

-Assign expectations between the legacy paced team and the hyperactive sponsor

-Taylor the communications to the short comings of the sponsor

-Obtain written agreement in a project charter to the role and responsibilities of the sponsor

-Go to see management to resolve organizational confusion over sponsor role and scope

Change Management - Beyond Textbook, what do you need to do?

-Small steps, too much change at once, people resistant, good people leave

-Vision, pick something and follow through, don't keep switching strategy

-Work with middle management/layer – they are in touch with workers

-Lead by example, execs also trying to change and talking action

-Follow up, communication, rationalization and transparency, people need to understand why

-Empowerment, engagement get the subject matter experts involved early, super users

-The right tools make a difference (office 365 no one drive better)

-More process, appropriate planning, time to plan leverage experts

-Ensure communication and transparency, so that you get feedback from everyone to validate things are working

How can a BA provide value on Agile Projects?

-BA can write requirements and do the testing

-BA can act as a proxy for product owner

-BA can prioritize the backlog

-A BA can also be a product owner and make decisions

-BA's can be plugged into Agile teams to do analytics, but not be a team member

-BA can help planning on project

-Keep the team focused on big picture. "Mother bear" keeping team on track

-BA writes user stories and manages backlog

-BA can run demo/show theme

Industry trends for BA Career Path

-many options for BA career path

-Hybird roles – BA IPM or BA / DA

-Agile – options for Scrum Master Product Owner

-Transitions to product owner / or product manager role (more technical)

-CBAP is helpful so can go anywhere even If don't have specific industry knowledge

-Possibility to transition into data analyst / date science roles

-BA skills are transferable to many roles

-Standardize what being a BA means

-Hybird roles

PMO - do they help Project Managers or are they really only suited for reporting status of projects upwards?

-If no PMO exists and projects are run in functional groups, accountability

-PMO can mean project, program or portfolio management office, and even an enterprise PMO (Company-Wide)

-One firm has a project service group which includes PMs, Bas, QAs and management of the project portfolio

-PMO needs can vary based on size of firm and type of firm, such as government vs private

-PMOs ensure consistency the way projects are managed, with setting standards and structures and change management

-Value to PMs if the PMO has the decision-making role

-Some firms have a project office for every project, more rigor at lower lever and provide real help to PMs

-Biggest help PMOs can provide to PMs (and also the PMOs biggest challenge) is resource management/planning and forecasting

-Help by providing demand management process with steering committee and portfolio review board and overall project/program governance

-Provide project initiation process and insure PMs follow it

What skill sets are needed for a BA to be successful?

-Communication skills

-Collaboration – facilitation skills

-Detail Orientation

-Listening skills

-Visualize Processes

-Dependable, trustworthy, be flexible

-Empathy

New BA tools/trends?

-No matter how many new tools one introduces, whiteboards are still an effective tool

-No tool is a silver bullet

-Tools play different roles for different needs

-Many tools are used by BA organizations, not one set of tools fits all organizations

-Concerns of AI takeaway BA tasks – focus on personal touch lesson mundane tasks

-Industry trend around outsourcing BA tasks, less focus on keeping expertise inhouse

-One size doesn't fit all for tool selection