

Roundtable Takeaways

Agile and Lean Principles

- It's a Framework, rather than methodology.
- Requirements don't change, the understanding grows.
- Relationships between product owner, scrum master and product owner is important.
- WAGILE is often the "defined methodology" – which is a mix of waterfall and agile.
- Estimating at the beginning is a challenge. Agile does it and then re-estimates. Waterfall does it once.
- Break down work packages into value measurements to show the delivery of value. Value chain.
- Companies still suspect of having a BA role on an Agile team.
- Rely on BA for Product Owner. Try to make BA accountable – but the BA is the "proxy."
- One team is agile and interacting/dependent on another team that's waterfall – doesn't work for agile team.
- Often have to influence without authority.
- Waterfall takes too long to deliver value.
- To migrate to Agile, train from CEO to reception – change the culture, get buy-in and it works!
- How well people understand and trained on agile principles and guidelines determines the success of the implementation. Is it coming from top-down is this true organizational transformation?

Certifications

- Which certification is best? IT DEPENDS 😊
- BA certifications are not needed to be a good BA, but good BAs use certification to help validate their experience
- PMI-PBA is a project-focused certification focused on requirements traceability and managing changes whereas the IIBA's core certifications (ECBA, CCBA, CBAP) have the broader focus of business analysis work wherever it occurs (including pre-project enterprise analysis, daily operations and improvements and every place where requirements are elicited, captured, and utilized and managed)
- PMI-PBA is good for PMs who have to manage their own requirements
- Consider your career and what you're interested in – then look for the international organization of practitioners that describe the standards and what certifications they provide (IIBA for business analysis, PMI for project management, ASQ for quality, ACMP for change management, Agile Alliance for agile....)
- New business analysts should look into the ECBA to get an understanding of the industry terms and concepts, but then use it to get work assignments to get the experience
- If you're even considering the CCBA, go ahead and consider the CBAP as you probably have the experience
- ECBA has no experience requirements nor training requirements (CCBA and CBAP do have both)
- Consultants and contractors especially consider CBAP (or other certifications) to help qualify for contracted work as well as to justify increases in salary

Storytelling

- Data visualization
- Storytelling to support a script (theatre)
- User stories – storytelling aligned with the value to the organization
- Empathy
- Analogies – make it easier for people to understand
- Visualization
- Translate
- Know where the audience is at – what's their goal
- Using personas to make their experiences real

Communication and Presentation Skills

- When preparing for a presentation, start with the end in mind when planning your talking points and presentation slides. Determine what you want to audience to leave feeling, knowing, thinking and doing as a result of your presentation.
- Give yourself grace if/when you mess up or forget to share information during your presentation. Remember the audience doesn't know you messed up until you tell them.
- The best way to engage an audience is to be relatable so that they can find common connections between you and them. Use humor and storytelling, but don't over saturate your presentation with it.

Conflict Management

- Active listening is key (Includes listening for understanding.)
- If you can't resolve it after five days, escalate it to the manager(s) – both parties attend.
- Be direct.
- Remember the big picture – we're on the same team.
- Identify your shared goals.
- Keep a positive mindset throughout.
- Preserve the relationship
- Pick your battles.
- "When I think there's something wrong, there's something wrong". (EQ)

Virtual Engagement

- Limit the number of participants invited and disable forwarding (can be set as a default in Outlook)
- Set clear rules for the meeting (eg. should cameras be on/off/or optional?)
- Set clear expectations and objectives to avoid having people multitask
- Set clear expectations in the invitation - on the subject line. (eg. Cameras On/Off; Working session etc.)
- Turn on closed captioning

- Between meetings, engage the team with fun comments/activities via Slack/Teams or other internal communication tool
- Determine which techniques to use based on the audience
- Share screen to keep people engaged during a meeting - either share note-taking or the agenda
- Set ground rules: Cameras on/off; Expect to be called-on etc.