

INTRO TO THE TEAM LEVEL UP WORKSHOP

May 22, 2025
©2025 Joseph Little

REMINDER

I will give you this slide deck as a PDF, if...

- * I have your email address.

- * You can send your email: (a) via the Chat window or (b) you send me a quick email (info@leanagiletraining.com).

QUICK SURVEY

Quick survey on Experience Level

a) “Newbie”: 0-6 months doing Scrum

b) “Experience”: >6 months doing Scrum

Answer in Chat please (or verbally)

ASK QUESTIONS

Along the way or at the end, or both.

Verbally or via Chat.

A WAY TO —> PROBLEM

The Team Level Up workshop is a way to address two key problems that your team(s) likely have.

LIKELY RESULT

Big Improvement in 6-12 months.

....25%? 50%? More?

Smaller Improvement quickly.

PROBLEMS

1. Team members have not Level Set (on the game they are playing)
2. Team members have not agreed to Level Up, nor how to do it

PROBLEM I

I. I-A: Team members have not agreed on the game (rules) they are playing.
Why?

- They were taught by different people
- They mis-remember
- They accepted agile-scrum in different ways
- They have different experiences of what works or does not
- No one asked them to agree on “the game” and the rules
- Result: NOT as effective as they could be

PROBLEM I

I. I-B: It's really more than the rules (eg, in the Scrum Guide).

- The mindset
- The whole “way of working”
- The Team approach to Success and other things that should be added to the BARE framework of Scrum
 - This is 360 degrees. Including, eg, product strategy
- How the Team fits in with the Organization, the Customers, and the rest of the world

PROBLEM 2

2. Team has plateaued - How do you see it? one or more of:

- No attempt to improve (or weak)
- Velocity not improving (much)
- They do not visualize a path of improvement
- No Impediment List (thus, no action)
- Often weak morale
- Can be other problems (hidden)
- RESULT: Zero to Minimal ongoing improvement. (And they can improve a lot.)

PROBLEMS

- These are: Common, likely problems
- Do your teams have these problems?
- If so: We want to address both of these

GOAL / SOLUTION

- To become better as a Team.
- Specifically:
 - Level Set (the team members - and perhaps others - agree on their way-of-working)
 - Level Up (work to become better as a Team)

BASICS

- 24 hours of workshop
- Online (eg, HHFHH) or in-person (eg, FFF)
- In-House (probably 10+ people) or public
- Educating, discussing, they are choosing (and rejecting some)
 - Their choice is important. They are choosing to play this Game.

LEVEL SET

- We review and propose (and the Team can propose) ...
- Specific ideas and practices
 - Not just ideas (values, principles)
 - Not just practices (with possibly no meaning)
 - Not just stuff in the Scrum Guide
- With 200+ stickies, they (the Team) decide and agree on what agile-scrum will be for them. As a baseline.
- A long and fairly detailed list (ROM:200+ stickies)

LEVEL UP

- We propose and they can propose ...
- ...specific ways they can get better
- The Team get to decide how they want to become better
- ...how they want to raise their level of play
- Again: A long and detailed list to choose from (ROM: 200+ stickies)

LEVEL-UP - 2

- So far, every Team has felt challenged (in a good way) by some of the suggestions the Scrum community has made
- So far, every Team has chosen 10 key things to improve on
 - Really more. But the top 10.
- So, in that way, we feel confident that your team will find areas to improve
- Note again: both the Team and we may propose areas for improvement during the workshop

KEY IDEA

- Scrum is simple to understand, difficult to master
- We go over the “basics” of agile & Scrum, plus
- In several ways, we try to give the Team what they need to raise their success level with agile-scrum



PRIORITIZE

- So far we find: there are always too many things to change or improve.
- So, we encourage them to prioritize the changes or the things they want to start to do.
- In a realistic timeframe (say, in the next 3-6 months).
- This makes a “plan” (for change, for new practices) that is realistic.



METHODS

- Discussion
- Q&A
- Stickies (breaking down into small things)
- Voting on Stickies
- Consensus building
- Drawings, Notes (take-aways)
- Interactive (eg, calling on people)



WE REMIND & PROPOSE

- We remind them of key things in Agile, Scrum, Lean, Knowledge Work, etc.; we propose good patterns (eg, to address specific problems). (Again, any person can propose too.)
- AND...they must **disagree**. They get to say: “Ok, but I don’t think that will help us”, or “we don’t need to focus on that now”
- They have time. (24 hours of workshop time) To understand, ask question, think, and choose (as a Team)

WE ARE UNIQUE - I

- We have co-trained with Jeff Sutherland 8 times
- We are the only trainer with a Team Level Up workshop
- We include the Agile Release Planning ideas
- We include an ARP workshop
- We conduct the TLU workshop in a unique, engaging style



WE ARE UNIQUE - 2

- We took Ken Schwaber's course
- We have 16+ years as a CST.
And 18+ years full-time in agile
- We have worked with many of the best. All around the world (eg, India, Argentina, etc.)
- No one else let's the Team define "the process". (With guidance) **
- It's fun! A Game. Play to win. Mistakes are expected.



WE ARE UNIQUE - 3

- We provide free 1-hour webinars weekly to support you
- We have an MBA, so we look for overall business success with agile-scrum
- We believe you can make big changes if you work together
- We have studied Lean, and discuss that if your culture knows Lean
- We have written books on Agile Release Planning and Scrum. We write blog posts and articles regularly. See [here](#) and [here](#).



WORKSHOP APPROACH

- Collegial
- Work in small groups
- Learn from each other
- Real (it's their situation)
- Engaging



RESULTS

- Many, but including:
 - Level Set - much more of a common understanding, and an agreement to do it together. Very valuable.
 - Level Up - they agree to Level Up, and discuss specifics of how.
 - their specific problems or concerns are identified and heard
- One especially:
 - A list of the top 10 things to improve on soon (next 3-6 months)

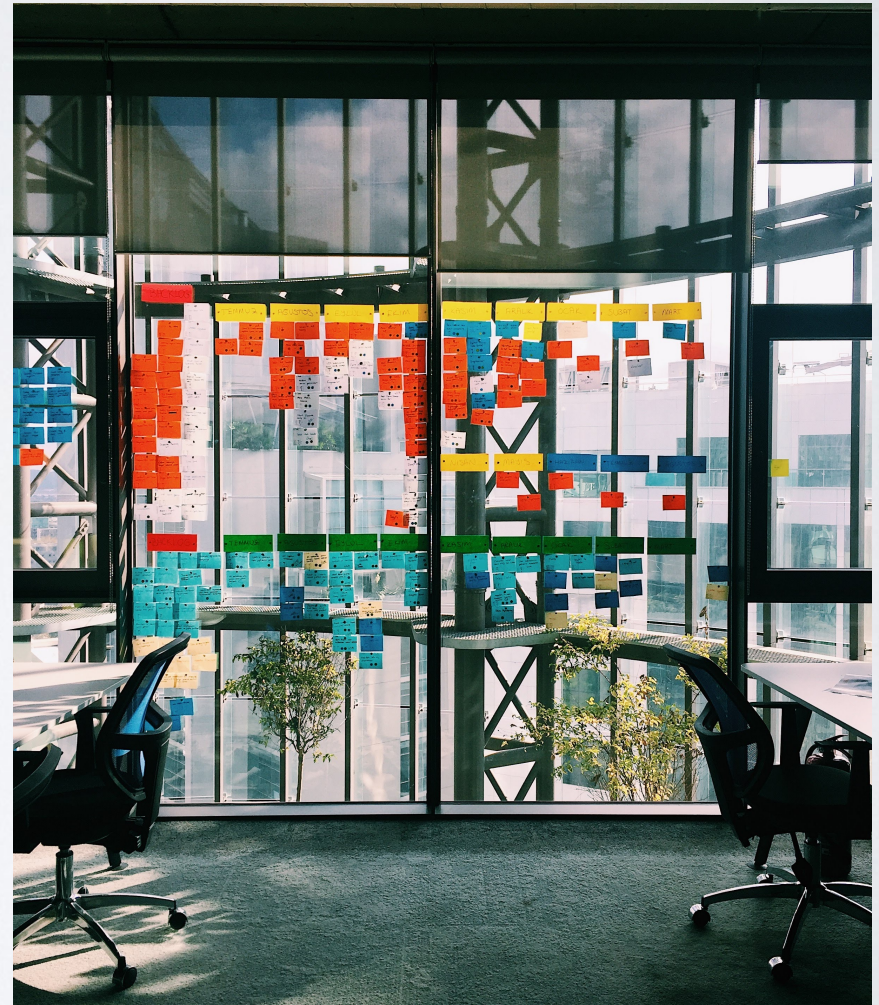
AGILE RELEASE PLANNING

- The ARP Workshop is Unique
- At least one other expert agrees with every idea
- Hands-on, real work
- A mindset and practices
- Many skill sets that they must know well (and execute better every sprint)



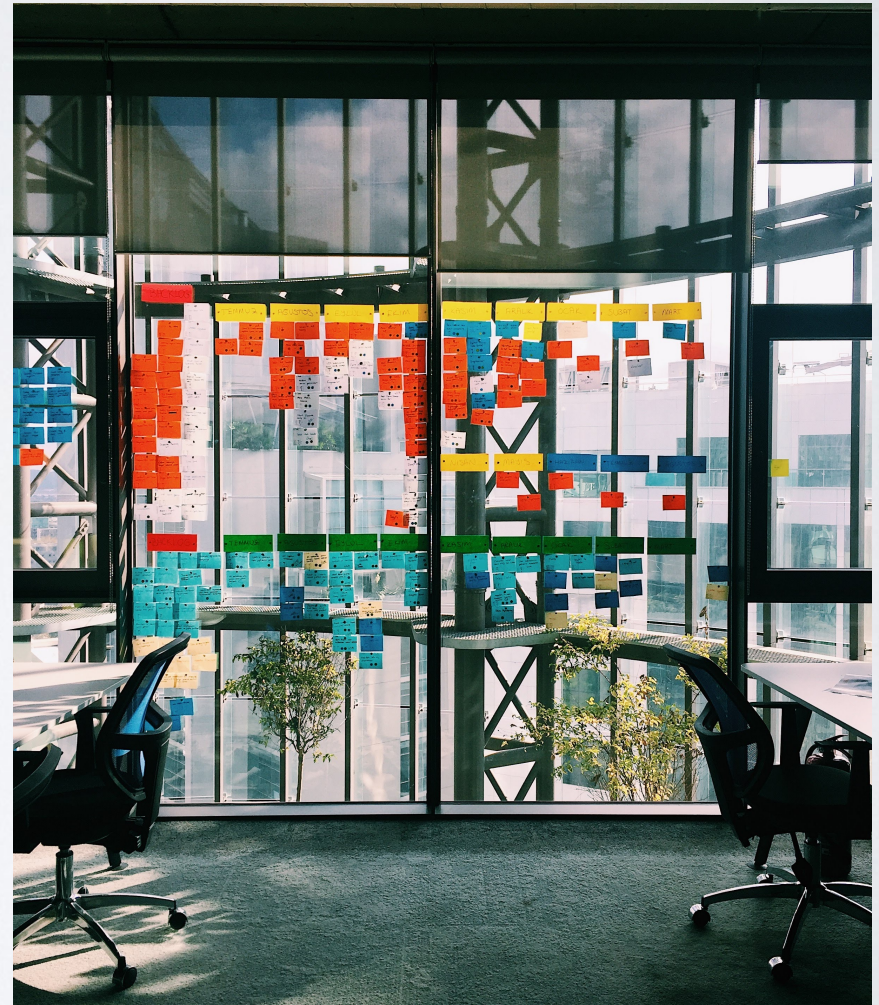
AGILE RELEASE PLANNING

- For about 8 hours we discuss and do Agile Release Planning (similar to my ARP workshop).
- We do it with real work for their Team.
- They buy-in (eg, to the initial plan)
- But in any case, they have a better Product Backlog
- And a better, more transparent, sense of where they are going (motivation)
- Other benefits too.



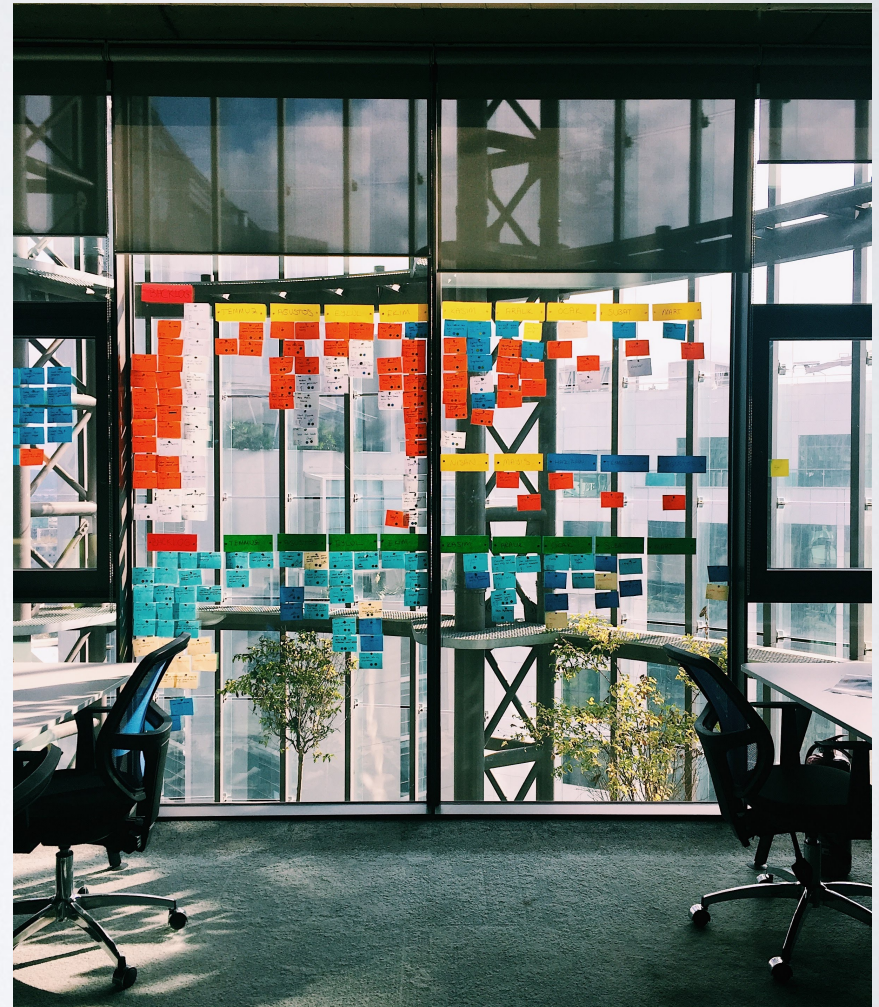
ARP INCLUDES:

- Vision (Prod Goal)
- Product Backlog
 - Roles
 - User story workshop
- Business Value
 - Drivers
 - Priority Poker
- Effort
 - DOD
 - Planning Poker
- R Factor (ROI, Bang for the buck, etc)



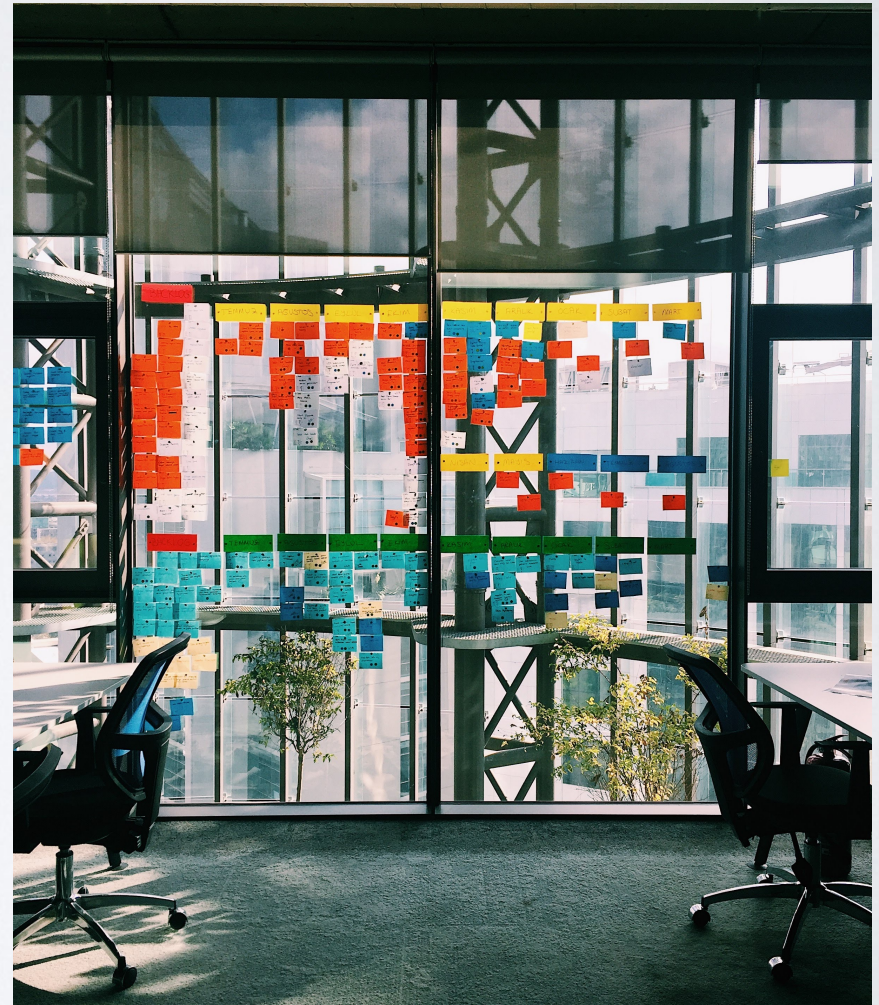
ARP INCLUDES (2):

- Re-order based on Other Factors (dependencies, etc)
- Expected Velocity
- Laying out the stories into Sprints
- Adding Contingency
- Adding Landing Strip (mainly final testing)
- First guess at The Date
- Prioritizing our stupidity



ARP INCLUDES (3):

- Product Backlog Refinement
- Pulling in new knowledge
- Thereby: revising the plan
- Changing the culture (we assume)



THE BUY-IN

- We allocate specific times to review, and agree (or disagree) on...
 - Our “way of working” (“process”)
 - How we will improve
- At the end, we prioritize 10 items for improvement

VISION / PRODUCT GOAL

- We emphasize this.
- Motivation is very important.
- We share some ideas, and talk about this issue

OUR PROPOSED TEAM GOALS

- More fun / happiness
- Probably fewer hours
- More productivity (eg, more SPs per Sprint)
- Better for the Team
- Less stress
- Easier for Managers
- More BV (per SP)
- More quality
- More collaboration (they help each other more)
- More for the customers

TEAM'S GOALS

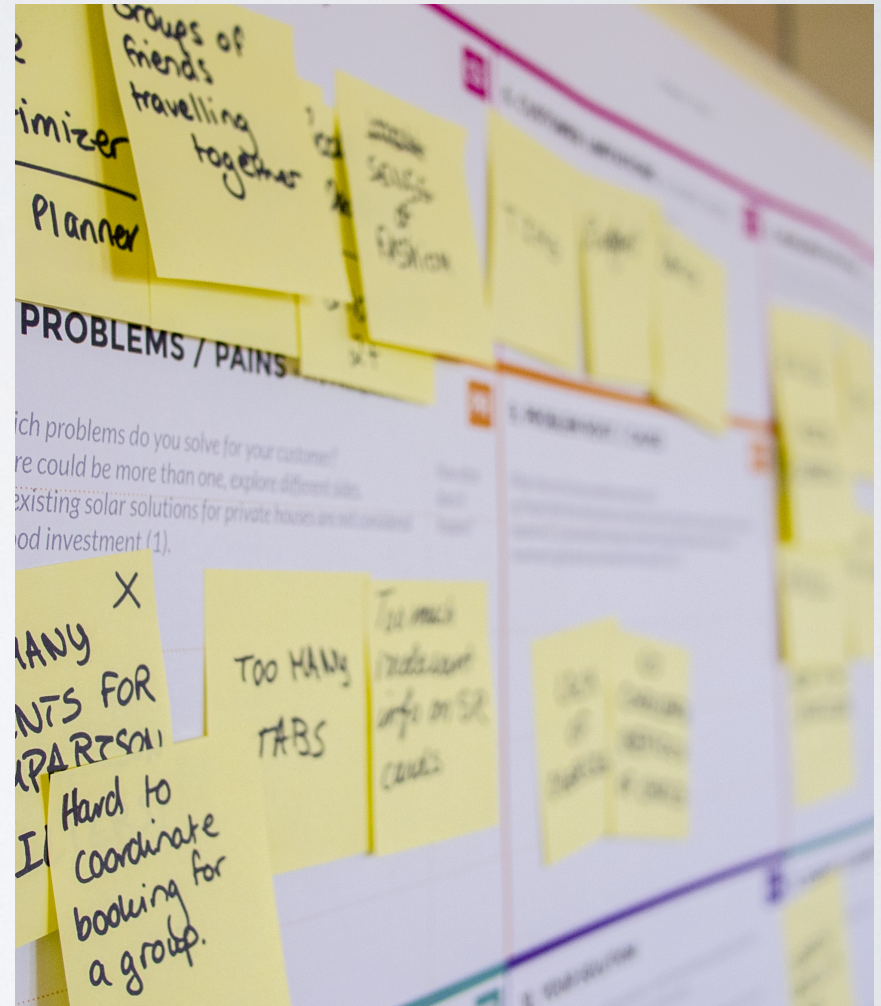
- We (the Team) share the goals: what is Team Success? (Separate from Product Success.)
- The TEAM must define their own goals
- Might be similar, might be quite different. We strongly recommend having a defined goal (that's expected to change)

WHEN'S THE NEXT T.L.U. WORKSHOP?

- **“In-House”!**
- That is, you choose the dates.
- **Public:** See LeanAgileTraining.com

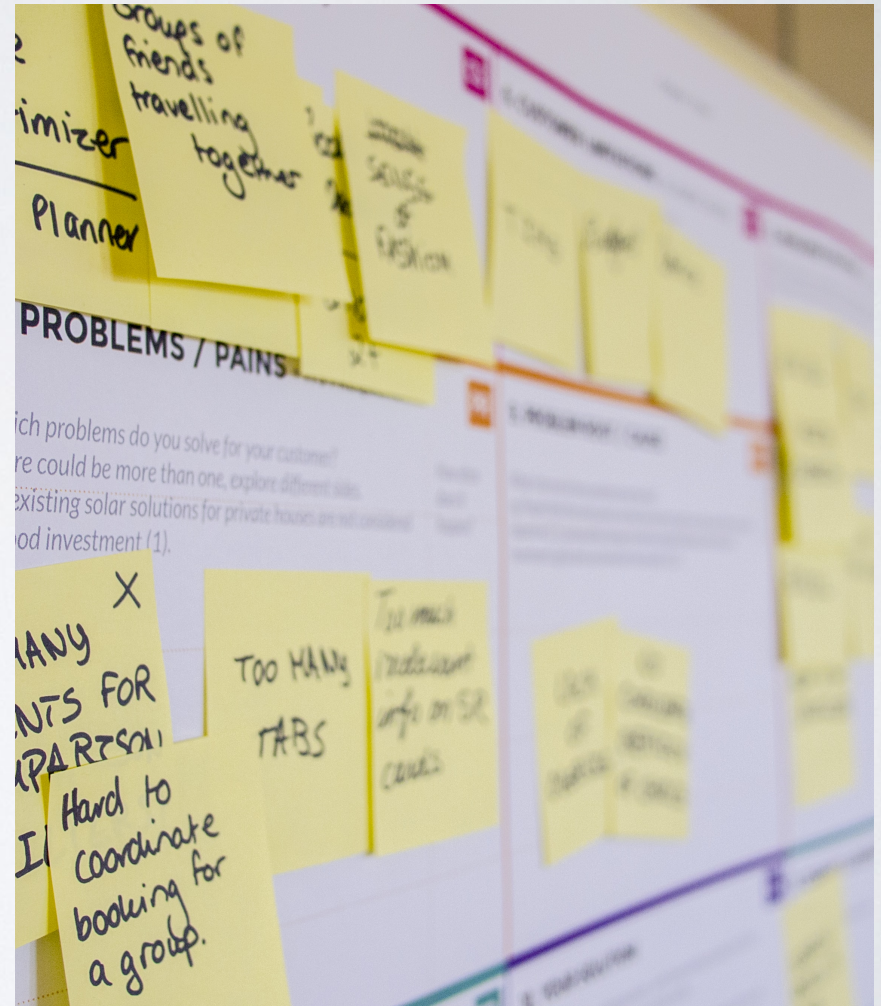
SOME DETAILS

- 10+ people
- In-person (Or online?)
- 24 hours (eg, over 3-5 days)
- 5+5+5+5+4? or F-F-F
- One or two or three teams.
Full teams if you can (7 person teams?)



PRICE

- For now: \$250 per person if we get at least 5 people.
- Charlotte?
- And each participant becomes a CSM (or renews)



MORE DETAILS

- Max: 25 in-person?
- Include some people outside the Team (eg, managers)

YOUR QUESTIONS

- Please ask. Others want to ask what you are asking...
- Or send me questions later.
Or we can talk



CONTACT INFO FOR JOE LITTLE

Please feel free to ask questions anytime:

- **www.LeanAgileTraining.com**
- jhlittle@LeanAgileTraining.com
- 704-376-8881