Intro: 8 Value-related Scrum Patterns

Joe Little - August 8, 2024
Webinar @2024 Joseph Little



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A special thank you to James Coplien and Jeff Sutherland for all their work on Scrum Patterns and things related. And to the Patterns Group.

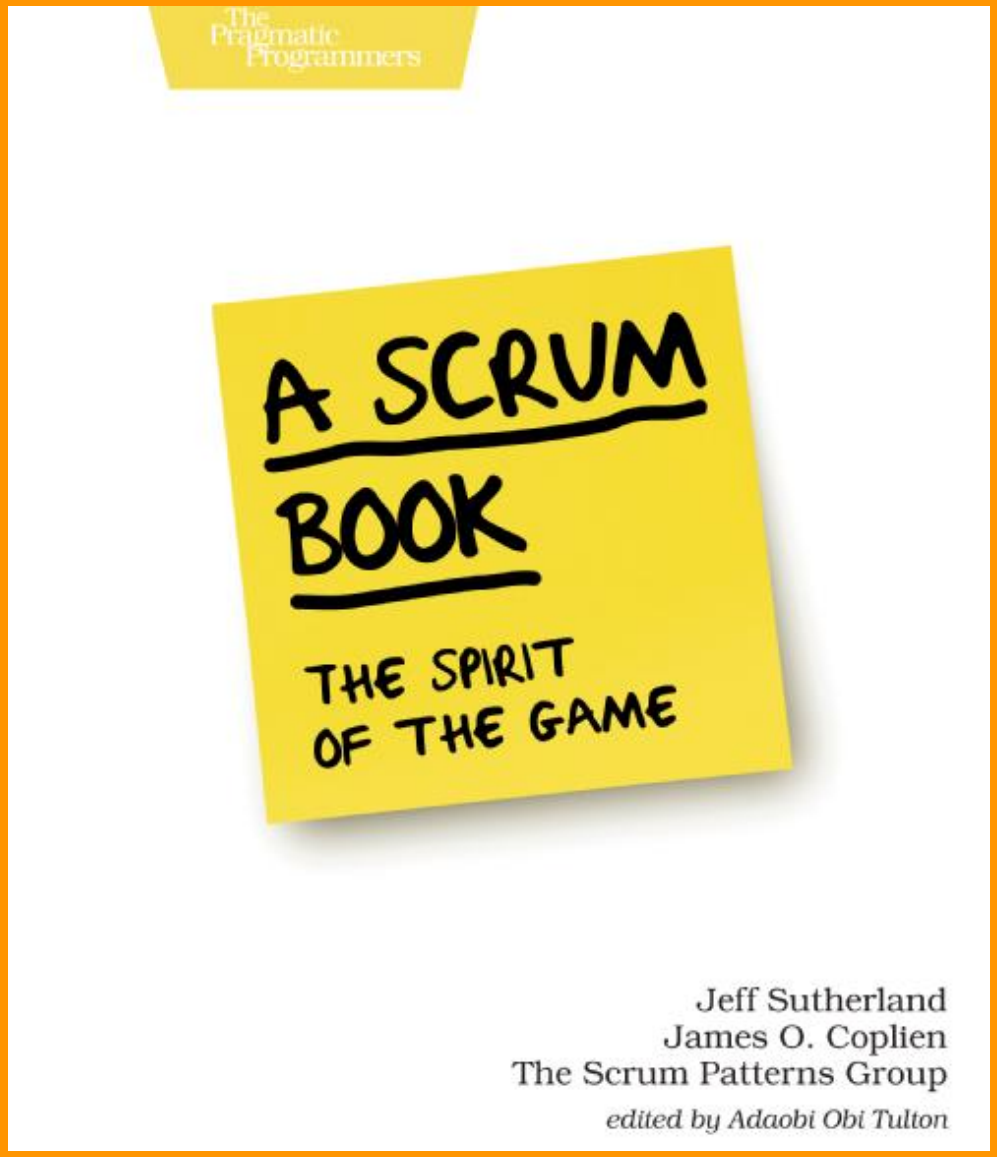
Agenda

- Intro - Why, What are Patterns, etc.
- A list of the patterns for today
- Review of those patterns (quickly)
- Closing



A Scrum Book

- Get it!
- https://pragprog.com/titles/jcscrum/a-scrum-book/
- STRONGLY recommended…
- Yes, expensive. Worth it!



Two key things

- Go to this webpage:
- https://www.scrumplop.org/
- https://scrumbook.org/

- STRONGLY recommended…

- Please ask questions and discuss.
- Much more interesting for everyone.
- You can discuss at any time. Just speak up…



Patterns

- Christopher Alexander, architect
- “A Timeless Way of Building”
- “A Pattern Language”



Patterns influenced Agile (and other people as well)

- James Coplien - Organizational Patterns in “Organizational Patterns of Agile Software Development, 2004.
- A Scrum Book - Sutherland, Coplien et al.
  - STRONGLY recommended.
  - And ScrumPLOP.org
  - https://scrumbook.org/ [show TOC]
- There are also patterns for “everything”.
  - Ex: More Fearless Change - Manns and Rising



Two contradictory ideas

- Patterns are “obvious”. Natural, common-sense, what “everyone” thinks of.
  - But also common-sense is not very common. And we forget the obvious.
  - Likely: You do many of them now (or almost do)

- Patterns are subtle
  - The idea sneaks up on you.
  - There is rigor (and simplicity) in how we present them and use them.
  - They are more than they appear to be
  - They have their own ethos



Why do we care?

- Patterns enable us to see ideas, in the culture, well-known ideas, that can help us
- The Patterns present the ideas in a way that makes them practical, usable

- Patterns can enable us to do basic Scrum better
- Patterns can enable us to extend Agile - Scrum to achieve even more



More directly…

- Patterns help us **solve** problems, one pattern at a time.
- Thus, one assembles patterns so that, as a group, they together **fit** your situation and your needs
- Patterns enable you and your Team to **evolve**, one step at a time.



The Spirit of the Game

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/value-stream/the-spirit-of-the-game
- There is a spirit (to it and behind it).
- Scrum is a Game. (Fun!)
- Playing the game well is different than following the rules.
- The rules are simple.
- Scrum is only a bare framework.
- You must find answers and deal with the “impediments” that arise.



8 Value-related Patterns

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#3 Fertile Soil

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/product-organization-pattern-language/development-team/fertile-soil
- “It is the moment-by-moment interactions of people working together on a product that build and sustain product organizations. Interaction qualities both reflect and define organization qualities.”
- To build a product of the Greatest Value requires that producers work in a way that allows the team to recognize such value when they achieve it, and to support decisions that carry the team in that direction. Where our interactions focus on our own concerns or controlling others, we limit the opportunity for growth: for others, ourselves, and the organization we are working in.



Fertile Soil- 2

- Therefore: Demonstrate the values of Commitment, Focus, Openness, Respect and Courage in your day-to-day behaviors and interactions.
- This helps create a virtuous circle that supports transparency, and that makes it possible to build on the inspection and adaptation at the core of effective Scrum efforts.
- “The soil is tended and prepared, the seeds are watered, and when the seeds grow, the soil is maintained, weeded, and watered again until finally the fruit is ready.” (Liker’s book)



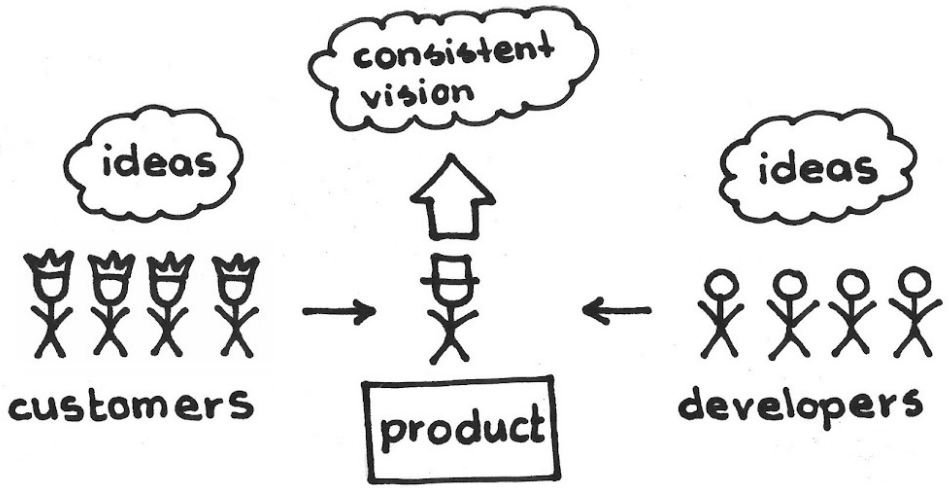
#11 Product Owner

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/product-organization-pattern-language/product-owner
- *...while everyone holds their own broad notion of the Vision and of possible good outcomes, the community seeks a leader around whom they can rally their passion and enthusiasm.*
- *One person needs to be responsible for the Product Backlog. This person needs deep domain knowledge, business insight, understanding of product technology, technical dependencies, and the authority to force rank the backlog to maximize business value.*
- *Cf. Product Owner Team.*



Product Owner - 2

- *Therefore: Get a Product Owner to order the Product Backlog and take responsibility for the vision of the product, and for the value that emanates from the delivery of that vision.*
- *True Product Owners are driven by Product Pride.*
- *The best Product Owner is as close to value delivery as possible.*
- *The Product Owner manages all business relationships external to the team, which eliminates handoffs between the business vision and the development effort.*



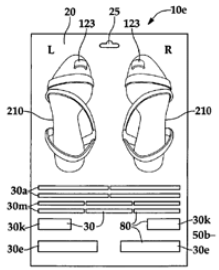
#63 Enabling Spec

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/value-stream/product-backlog/enabling-specification

- Unexplored requirements cause unpleasant surprises.

- The agile tradition is that user stories suffice as requirements artifacts, and early agile practice often blindly believed in deferring decisions and in having a ready, at-hand, on-site customer who could compensate for requirements shortfalls discovered during development.





Enabling specification for U.S. Patent 7,329,448: Adhesive Pads for Footwear.

Enabling Spec - 3

- Since estimation focuses on what happens within the Sprint, it's important to move the uncertainty of analysis outside the Sprint—into the Product Owner process.
- Therefore: The Product Owner should deliver Enabling Specifications as a sign that he or she has done due diligence in exploring the requirements space.
- An Enabling Specification is a specification rich enough that someone reasonably skilled in the discipline can implement a solution without substantial subsequent clarification with people outside the Scrum Team.



Enabling Spec - 4

- The Scrum Guide says that part of the job of the Product Owner is “[e]nsuring the Development Team understands items in the Product Backlog to the level needed.”
- Enabling Specification(s) in hand, the Development Team is prepared to create a Sprint Backlog based on a deep understanding of the upcoming delivery stream.
- It is less important that the specifications be written down beforehand than it is that the Product Owner has done his or her homework and that the team has thoroughly discussed the new item.



#12 Product Owner Team

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/product-organization-pattern-language/product-owner-team
- A single Product Owner is accountable for all value such as return on investment and should handle market analysis, product discovery, stakeholder management, customer feedback, and most other market-facing work, while also enabling the team to build the right thing.
- The Product Owner has more to do than a single person can handle well.



Product Owner Team - 2

- Therefore: Create a Product Owner Team, led by the Chief Product Owner, whose members together carry out product ownership.
- PO needs:
  - To order / sequence the PBIs
  - To get the PBIs READY
  - To build the Enabling Specs
  - To reflect on Product strategy
- One final decision-maker for the PO Team



Product Owner Team - 3

- Are all PO Team members full-time?
- Compare to “Business Stakeholders”?
- Compare to “Minions”?
- What are the potential problems?



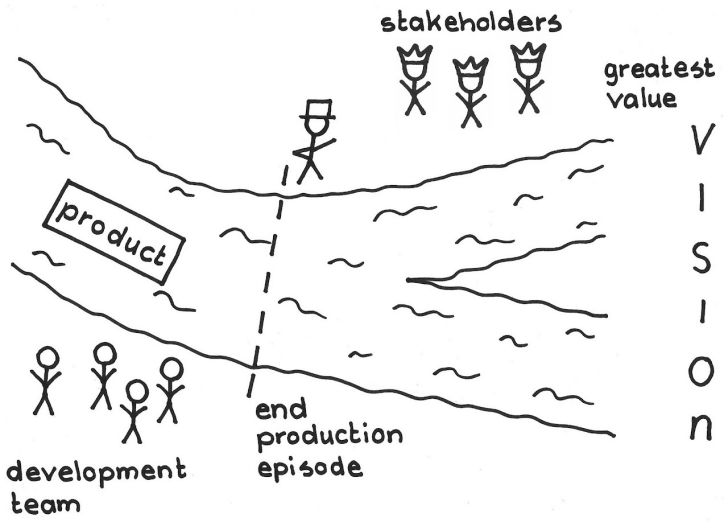
#35 Sprint Review

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/value-stream/sprint-review
- At the end of the Sprint, you always need feedback about what you built. Independent!
- Therefore: End [with a Sprint Review] to assess the status of the product and to learn about end-user needs, risks, opportunities, problems, and likely completion dates to ensure the product is moving in the direction of Greatest Value.
- A good way to address problems in complex development is with short feedback loops that let stakeholders assess the solution so the team can adapt quickly without going too far astray.



Sprint Review - 2

- Invite Devs, PO, stakeholders, key end users, etc
- The participants inspect the product not only to learn about the suitability of the current product increment for delivery, but to provide information to shape future work (such as reordering the Product Backlog).
- Many Scrum adherents view the Sprint Review as the main mechanism of agile feedback in Scrum, bringing to mind the usual forces of emergent requirements and market changes, change in business conditions, and so forth. [But…]
- Suggest additional “demos”



Sprint Review - 3

- The discussions should consider indicators of product health including the Development Team’s velocity, the conjectural (and real) level of technical debt, the current status of bugs and builds, and progress on the Product Roadmap.



#54 Product Backlog

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/value-stream/product-backlog
- *At any given time, it is important that the whole team is aligned about what it needs to deliver next, and that the direction be transparent.*
- *a Scrum Team works with stakeholders to sacrifice stability of schedule in the interest of increasing value.*
- *It's important to make product direction decisions transparent to stakeholders. [& Team]*



Product Backlog - 2

- *The delivery order must reflect dependencies between deliverables, as well as coordination with project calendar events: deliveries from suppliers, marketing campaigns, releases by partners or competitors, and so forth.*
- *Therefore: For each product, create a single ordered list called the Product Backlog—a list of Product Increment contributions called Product Backlog Items (PBIs), arranged in their expected delivery order.*
- PBL evolves with PO+Devs+stakeholders, using PB Refinement & Sprint Planning, etc.



Product Backlog - 3

- *The PBL has PB Items.*
- The top of the PBL is refined, so that items are small enough, in the right order, and with sufficient detail that the Devs feel they can accept (& complete) the items in the next Sprint(s).
- Annotating each PBI with a cost or estimate of **effort**, as well as that PBI's contribution to **value** (see Value and ROI) can help the Product Owner optimize value during business planning.
- At any given time it represents the Product Owner's best possible path to value through the Product Roadmap, and best possible realization of the Vision.



#50 ROI-Ordered Backlog

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/value-stream/product-backlog/roi-ordered-backlog
- *The goal of a Scrum Team is to deliver value, and it is the responsibility of the Product Owner to optimize long-term value (see Value and ROI).*
- *Most Product Owners annotate each PBI with a tentative ROI….*
- *Therefore: The Product Owner orders PBIs in a way that generates the largest long-term ROI.*



ROI-Ordered Backlog - 2

- *However, Product Backlog ordering focuses on overall, emergent value, which is often more complex than the sum of the values of individual PBIs.*
- *…Scrum supports the enterprise in optimizing any value, including non-economic values such as corporate reputation…*
- *Some market offerings make sense only if they build on previous offerings; some market offerings are sensitive to market timing.*



ROI-Ordered Backlog - 3

- *This evaluation can rarely be reduced to a formula. Such ordering is always imperfect and benefits from good judgment, insight, and experience.*
- *One point of the solution is worth reiterating: ROI needn't be just about money.*
- *To serve process improvement, ROI or other values need to be measurable—even if only in relative terms.*



#64 Refined Product Backlog

- https://sites.google.com/a/scrumplop.org/published-patterns/value-stream/product-backlog/refined-product-backlog
- *...you have a Product Backlog and the Scrum Team needs to look ahead in its planning.*
- *Agile enterprises must be poised to respond quickly to capitalize on opportunities to create value, and should avoid working—or planning—too far ahead. [But…]*
- *There may be a "last responsible moment" for market decisions; if it passes, the march of time and the resulting changing circumstances can take away your options or your ability to exercise them.*



Refined Product Backlog - 2

- *Further complicating this is the fact that some deliverables have hard dependencies on others.*
- *but tomorrow may bring a window of opportunity that could create even higher value with a different backlog ordering.*
- *Therefore: The Scrum Team (particularly the Product Owner and Development Team) should meet frequently to properly order the Product Backlog and to break down the most imminent large PBIs into smaller ones. The Development Team should maintain current estimates for the Product Backlog Items that it will eventually implement (Pigs Estimate).*
- *The Scrum Team should annotate PBIs on the backlog with estimates and value attributions.*



Refined Product Backlog - 3

- *PBIs near the top of the backlog (those for the next two to three Sprints) should be small enough so that no single one will require more work than **10 percent** of the Sprint development effort.*
- *Refinement includes detailed requirements analysis.*
- *Refinement is part of a learning process.*
- *Steve Johnson points to “the slow hunch” as a major factor in creativity; backlog refinement and estimation plant the seeds that kindle this process.*



Refined Product Backlog - 4

- *Just changing the order of a given set of items can often double the realized value.*
- *Work as diligently as possible to bring each PBI (near the top of the backlog) in line with the **Definition of Ready**.*
- *the total amount of face time that the Product Owner requires from the Developers should not in general be more than 10 percent of the working time.*
- It can be done as Prod Bklog Refinement mtg(s) or in other ways.
- Elsewhere: Do 20% of the work to get 80% of the value (Pareto Rule).



Done! We discussed 8!

- **Now we need your feedback.**

- **Take-away**
- **Questions / Discussion**



Key Take-away

- From these discussions, what is your biggest take-away?
- Or: what was the most useful thing you learned or thought of.
- Let’s share…



Discussion / Questions

- Just speak up….
- Or you can put something in the Chat…



Webinars

- Two types:
  - 30 mins - workshops, courses
  - 60 mins - ideas, issues

- See: LeanAgileTraining.com
- See: MeetUp.com and the Lean Agile Training webinars group

- Suggest some topics or sub-topics.



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