

CLARIFYING ROLES



Introduction

This game is useful when you are in a scrum environment where the separation of roles is unclear. It might be the case that there are more roles than prescribed by scrum, or that people are unaware of the responsibilities of each role.

Unclear or too many roles do not produce good scrum. Use this game to verify that the separation of concerns is implemented correctly or to prove the opposite.

This game is intended to be played with everybody fulfilling a role in your agile/scrum organization. Invite representatives of the teams to limit the number of attendees.

Preparation

- Print out the tasks pages of this deck
- Make role title cards on the wall for each role you see in your org.
- bring sticky tape

Also create a parking lot to park cards that take up too much time for discussion.

For example:

- Team
- PO (product owner)
- PM (product manager)
- DM (Delivery Manager)
- PA (platform architect)
- Parking lot

How the game goes

- Set a time-box
- Introduce the game to the attendees
- put the task cards on the table (closed)
- Have attendees pick one task card from the closed deck and place it under the role that is responsible for his task
- Let them motivate why
- Facilitate discussion

Notes

- there are also “never do this” task cards
- If a task is unclear to all, don't discuss it, throw it aside
- If we disagree, move card in parking lot and note reason for discussion.

How the Game ends...

Stop when the time-box is over. If you did not discuss all task cards, that's no problem.

Ask the attendees to formulate a conclusion:

- Can we get rid of certain roles?
- Does each role have sufficient autonomy?
- How are we going to enforce a better separation of roles?

Determine further follow-up steps.

Create a report of the conclusions and communicate them to the teams.

Task cards

Decides features in a release
Prioritises technical debt vs functionality
Selects Themes for product roadmap
Influences Team composition
Decides Technical solution
Sets Sprint scope
Set severity of bugs
Informs management about (not) meeting goals

Prioritizes backlog items
Approves hours worked
Sets Business value of user story
Manage sprint backlog
Handles customer escalation
Discusses roadmap with customers
Approves Team member day off
Decides if a PBI is done
Verifies the integrated product

Stakeholders management
Resolves cross team impediments
Releases planning and forecasting
Hosts the sprint review
Maximizes ROI in product
Selects and hires a new technical writer
Establishes vision
Ensure vision is understood by teams
Is the Primary product specialist

Makes sure deadlines are met
Discusses dependencies with management
Selects new technologies
Has team member appraisals
Discuss implementation details with customers
Owens overall product vision

OUTCOMES

Anticipated outcome of the session were:

- understanding the PO role
- understanding the different points of view on responsibilities
- understanding how agile management and PO can work together

The activities we did map to roles were:

PM/VP role will

- handle Sprint reviews,
- select themes for roadmap
- inform higher management about (not) meeting goals

PO role will

- decide if pbi is done
- approve hours worked
- manage stakeholders
- prioritize backlog items
- prioritize technical debt vs functionality
- ensure vision is understood by teams

TEAM will

- resolve cross team impediments
- verify integrated product
- select and hire a new technical writer
- discuss dependencies with management
- approve team member day off
- handle customer escalation (team>Po>PM/VP>President)
- decide on technical solution: Team, but in case of no consensus: System owner

We did not reach consensus on these activities:

- do release planning and forecasting - Team + PO?
- discuss roadmap with customers: unclear what is meant with this task. Looks more like an effort from both PM/VP and PO

We did not map all activities to roles. If you think we need to have another session to map the remainder of activities or discuss the parked items, let me know.