Telling Your
Scrum Master Story

Communicating Your Achievements
in This Unique Role

Victor Bonacci, CST

OUTLINE

Opening: Why Stories - *8 minutes*

Part 1: Mining for Past Milestones - *15 minutes*
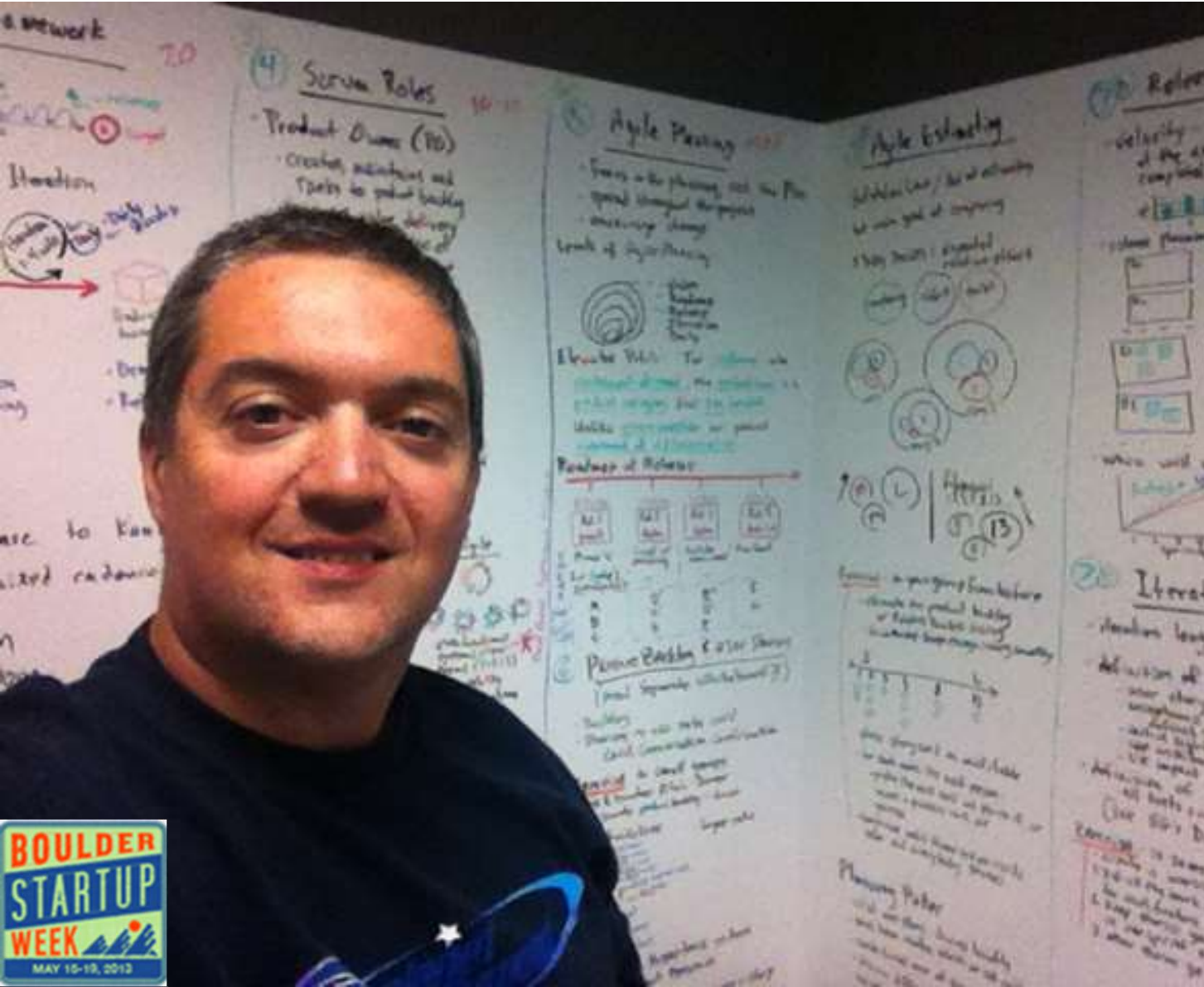
• Journey Lines (solo work and pair debriefs)

Part 2: Framing the Narrative - *15 minutes*

• Who is your Audience? (lecture and solo writing)

• Words to Use and Avoid (lecture and solo writing)

Part 3: Telling the Story (participants get hands-on practice in small groups) - *30 minutes*

• Intro, instructions, and form triads

• 3 Rounds (7 minutes each) of modified Troika Consulting (a Liberating Structure technique) where one person tells their story while the other two ask questions and give feedback. After each round, participants rotate roles.

• Resettle and hear volunteers share-back

Questions, Comments and Closing - *7 minutes*

Storytelling

It's what we do – it's in our DNA

What's that got to do with being a Scrum Master?

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ARTICLE | AGILE CAREERS

How to Write a Great Scrum Master Resume

Craft a stand-out resume for this one-of-a-kind role

BY VICTOR BONACCI

SEUs

0.25
available

My SEUs

Login to
see your
total

My Jobs

Deliver Newspapers
Paint Houses
Mow Lawns
Supermarket
McDonalds
HS Cafeteria
Land Surveying

WOUB Equipment Checkout
Donut Shop (night shift)
Film School Studio Manager
Roadie / Sound Mixer
Restauranteur: Casa Nueva
Video Documentaries
VISTA Volunteer
English Teacher in Japan (JET)
Sound Crew for Films

Webmaster
Programmer
Business School
Product Manager
Project Manager
Consultant

Agile Coach!

No Straight Lines

Therefore, stories!

Mining for Milestones

Where do
stories come
from...

...if new to Scrum?

An Example Checklist for ScrumMasters

Michael James
(mj4scrum@gmail.com)
14 September 2007
(Revised 2 Feb 2016)

A Full Time Facilitator?
An adequate ScrumMaster can handle two or three teams at a time. If you're content to limit your role to organizing meetings, enforcing timeboxes, and responding to the impediments people explicitly report, you can get by with part time attention to this role. The team will probably still exceed the baseline, pre-Scrum expectation at your organization, and probably nothing catastrophic will happen.

But if you can envision a team that has a great time accomplishing things no one previously thought possible, within a transformed organization, consider being a *great* ScrumMaster.

A great ScrumMaster can handle *one* team at a time.

We recommend one dedicated ScrumMaster per team of about seven when starting out.

If you haven't discovered all the work there is to do, tune in to your Product Owner, your team, your team's engineering practices, and the organization outside your team. While there's no single prescription for everyone, I've outlined typical things I've seen ScrumMasters overlook. Please mark each box with √, Δ, ?, or N/A, as described on the last page.

Part I -- How Is My Product Owner Doing?
ScrumMasters improve Product Owner effectiveness by helping them find ways to maintain the Product Backlog and release plan. (Note that the Product Owner is the one responsible for the prioritized backlog.)

☐ Is the Product Backlog prioritized according to his/her latest thinking?

☐ Are requirements and desirements from all stakeholders captured in the Product Backlog? Remember: the backlog is *emergent*.

☐ Is the Product Backlog a manageable size? To maintain a manageable number of items, keep things more granular towards the top, with general epics at the bottom. It's counterproductive to overanalyze too far past the top of the Product Backlog. Your requirements will change in an ongoing conversation between the developing product and the stakeholders/customers.

☐ [Could your requirements (especially those near the top of the Product Backlog) be better expressed as ...] puzzle

☐ Is the backlog an *information* ...

☐ If you're using an automated tool for backlog management, does everyone know how to use it easily? Automated management tools introduce the danger of becoming *information refrigerators* without active radiation from the ScrumMaster.

¹ http://xp123.com/articles/invest-in-good-stories-and-smart-tasks/

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scrummasterchecklist.org

AGILE TRAIL
BLOG ABOUT AGILE, LEAN, CHANGE AND IMPROVEMENT BY BERND SCHIFFER

42 Tasks for a Scrum Master's Job
BY BERND SCHIFFER posted on 14/11/2011

Questions like the following are coming up quite often when I do Scrum training or coaching:

Why should the Scrum Master and Project Manager roles be filled different people? (Quora)

Will a scrum master for a team of 10 be a full time position or can a programmer fill this position if highly trained in agile planning? (Quora)

Behind those questions is the assumption that the Scrum Master is not a full time role. The askers of those questions ... save money by merging two roles or by placing the ...

... you'd say are part of a Scrum masters job:

Meetings
- Facilitating meetings for the team. This includes:
  - preparing
  - moderation
  - postprocessing
- Holding retrospectives. Retrospectives are special meetings, therefore I count them separately.

Team Dynamics
- Coaching team members (e.g. with one-on-one coachings).
- Mediating through conflicts.
- Helping the team to make decisions.
- Fostering the developer team's self-organisation.
- Mediating the general conflict of goals between development team (high technical quality) and product owner (more features).

Learning
- Continuing learning regarding everything Agile (e.g. visit user groups, attend conferences, read books, write blogs, etc.).

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**agiletrail.com/2011/11/14/
42-tasks-for-a-scrum-masters-job**

SELF ASSESSMENT: SCRUM MASTER COMPETENCIES

Rate your skill level for each competency as either High (3), Med (2), Low (1) or none (0). Sum each row on the far right - max of 9 pts.

Meetings & Facilitation

Prepare for meetings _____ + Facilitating / moderating _____ + Post-meeting follow-up _____ = _____

Team Dynamics

Mediate conflicts _____ + Help team make decisions _____ + Foster self-organization on team _____ = _____

Learning

Continuous Agile self-study _____ + Giving feedback _____ + Exchange with other Scrum Masters _____ = _____

Product

agilecoffee.com/what-is-a-scrummaster/assessment

Bring people together _____ + Help team report to mgmt _____ + Champion Agile within the org _____ = _____

Psychology

Envision the future _____ + Surface team values _____ + Help team improve crucial conversations _____ = _____

Lead Change

Help clear impediments _____ + Suggest new metrics _____ + Help continuously improve process _____ = _____

Mirror

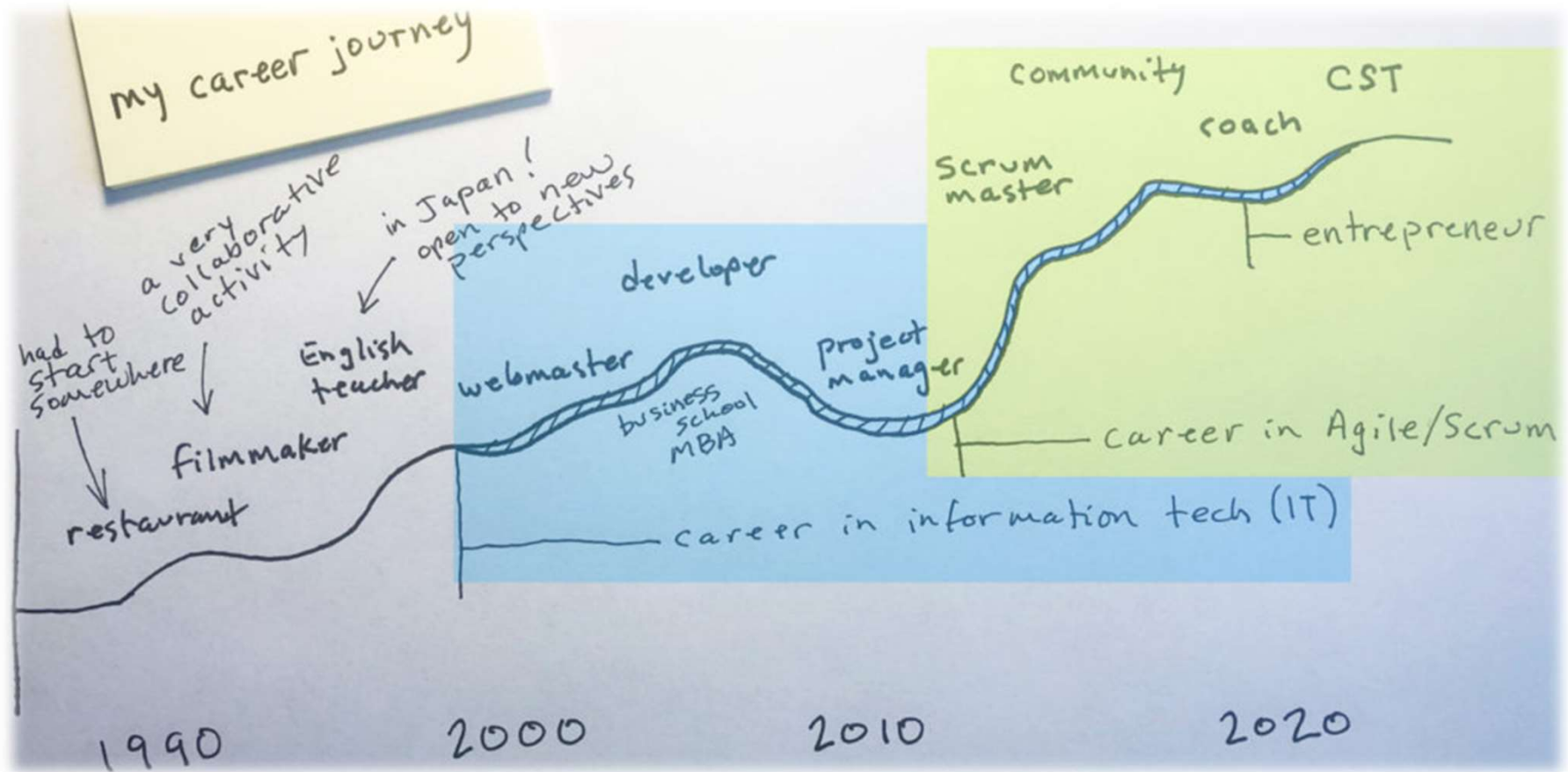Reflect Agile/Scrum values _____ + Keep team agreements _____ + Ask open questions _____ = _____

Miscellaneous

Help team keep focus _____ + Maintain Scrum tools _____ + Help PO define DoD _____ = _____

Source: **42 Tasks for a Scrum Master's Job** - http://agiletrail.com/2011/11/14/42-tasks-for-a-scrum-masters-job/

Capture Ups and Downs with *Journey Lines*

Your Turn

Journey Lines Debrief

What did you learn about yourself?

How did it feel sharing?

Other uses for Journey Lines include…

Framing the Narrative

Who is your Audience?

- Family and Friends

- Networking

- Job Seeking

- Career Growth

A Tale of Two Companies

Traditional Organization

- Bigger?
- Heavy with bureaucracy
- Follows a laundry list of processes
- Systems slow to change
- "Read" & filter many resumes
  - Rely on AI / keywords

Learning Organization

- More nimble
- Hands-on evaluation
- Less interested in keywords
  - Seek evidence via stories

Solo Writing

Watch Your Language

Active vs Passive voice

Passive	Active
The lamp was knocked over by Jerry	Jerry knocked over the lamp
Throughput was increased by 75%	We increased throughput by 75%
Scrum taught to all engineers	Taught Scrum to all engineers

Use Active voice with you, your team or organization as the subject.

Words to Use

Resume Power Words can:
- Improve Readability
- Vary the Language
- Describe with Impact

Describing an Achievement:
- Earn
- Exceed
- Grow
- Improve
- Reduced
- Surpass

Describing a Leadership Role:
- Chair
- Coach
- Cultivate
- Develop
- Enable
- Mentor
- Motivate
- Orchestrate
- Review
- Teach

Words to Avoid

Business Lingo

- Bottom line
- Value add
- Core competency
- Synergy
- Ecosystem
- Move the needle

General Phrases of Self-Promotion

- Go-getter
- Strategic thinker
- Proactive
- Think outside the box

Givens

- Hard worker
- Team player
- Self-motivated

Solo Writing

I look for evidence of what behaviors they have shifted on a team. So for example – instead of saying "Facilitated standups, refinement, retrospectives and demos" *I look for statements such as:*

"Improved standups and helped team better align on the work they are doing"

"Improved backlog refinement to help teams have a shared understanding of what they are building resulting in higher quality stories"

"Encouraged technical practices which led to a lower defect rate"

This helps me understand that the scrum master is not just facilitating events but helping the team get better.

LR, Senior Coach

Examples from a Scrum Master resume

- Increased predictability of team by 50% with better collaboration by setting realistic goals based on team's historical cadence;

- Reduced Escape Defects by more than 80% with effective Daily Scrums and articulate Definition of Done;

- Employed a hybrid style in product delivery – balancing a product increment view while presenting team's accomplishments in a monthly stakeholder meeting

Examples from a Scrum Master resume

- Engineered the Transformation by setting up Agile processes for the Product team and building reliable communication channels with other departments;

- Established a predictable Development process using Scrum to increase visibility of Product Backlog and system impediments;

- Increase team's Net Promoter Score by over 65% by engaging the Product Owners and Business Analysts to prioritize customer issues on a daily/weekly basis;

Telling your Story

Troika Consulting

Troika Consulting is a
Liberating Structure

Troika Consulting Debrief

What did you learn about yourself?

How did it feel sharing?

Other uses for Troika Consulting include…

What's Next?

- Continue telling your story!

- Practice this week while networking

- Resume Review and Interview Practice (North Convention Lobby)

Resources

Scrum Master Resume

- How to Write a Great Scrum Master Resume
  https://resources.**scrumalliance**.org/Article/**write-great-scrum-master-resume**
- Vic's page: **agilecoffee**.com/scrum-master-resume
  - Includes more info, survey results, links to audio podcasts, videos, etc.
- What is a ScrumMaster: https://agilecoffee.com/what-is-a-scrummaster

Journey Lines

- *Coaching Agile Teams* (Lyssa Adkins) pp.151-153

Troika Consulting (and other Liberating Structures)

- liberatingstructures.com