

Tales from the Coffee House 2: The Case of the Missing Stakeholders

The organization you work in has decided to try Scrum. They are not taking a “big bang” approach but have decided to pick a pilot project to give this new way of working a try. Training was provided to those identified as The Scrum Team: Development Team, Product Owner and to you as the ScrumMaster.

As the Development Team begins and Product Owner gets to work, things seemed a bit “quiet”. The Product Owner Refined Product Backlog Items with the Development Team prior to Sprint Planning but there seemed to be a lot of back and forth when the Development Team had questions that the P.O. had not anticipated and they would have to check with Stakeholders and get back to the team.

Sprint Reviews consisted of you, the Development Team and the Product Owner. The Product Owner would let the Development Team know what was and was not accepted and that would result in some items needing additional work in the subsequent Sprint.

You decide it’s time for a one on one conversation with the Product Owner. You begin by asking why the Product Owner has not asked for any Stakeholders to be invited to the Sprint Review. “That’s just our Scrum meeting,” the P.O. explains. “I have many other stakeholder meetings that I hold.”

As you explain the intent of the Sprint Review, the P.O. holds firm saying there are already too many meetings in Scrum and that they were not interested in adding another meeting to the Stakeholders’ schedules.

“Besides, we wouldn’t want the developers in a meeting with the business people would we,” says the Product Owner.

- Consider Empiricism (Transparency, Inspection and Adaptation) specifically. What is not working effectively?
- What would you do if you were the Scrum Master in this situation? Be as specific as you can.