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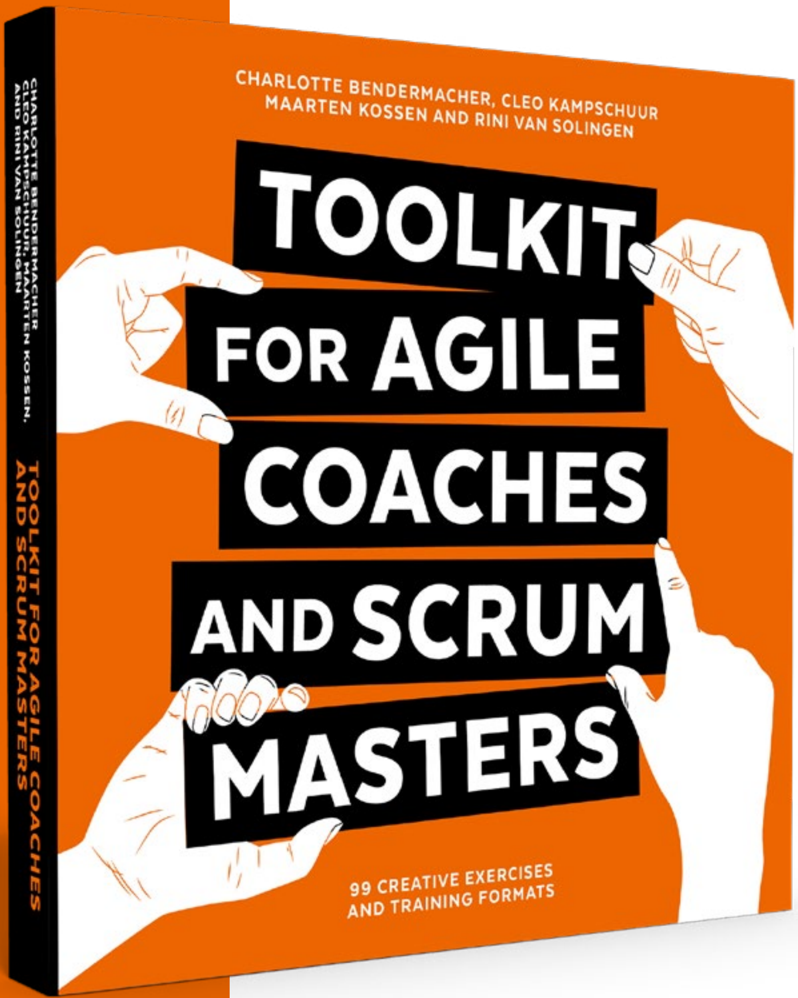
TOOLKIT FOR AGILE COACHES AND SCRUM MASTERS

99 CREATIVE EXERCISES
AND TRAINING FORMATS

AWESOME THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE TOOLKIT FOR AGILE COACHES AND SCRUM MASTERS! IN THIS MINI-BOOKLET, WE'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO TEN OF OUR FAVORITE EXERCISES.



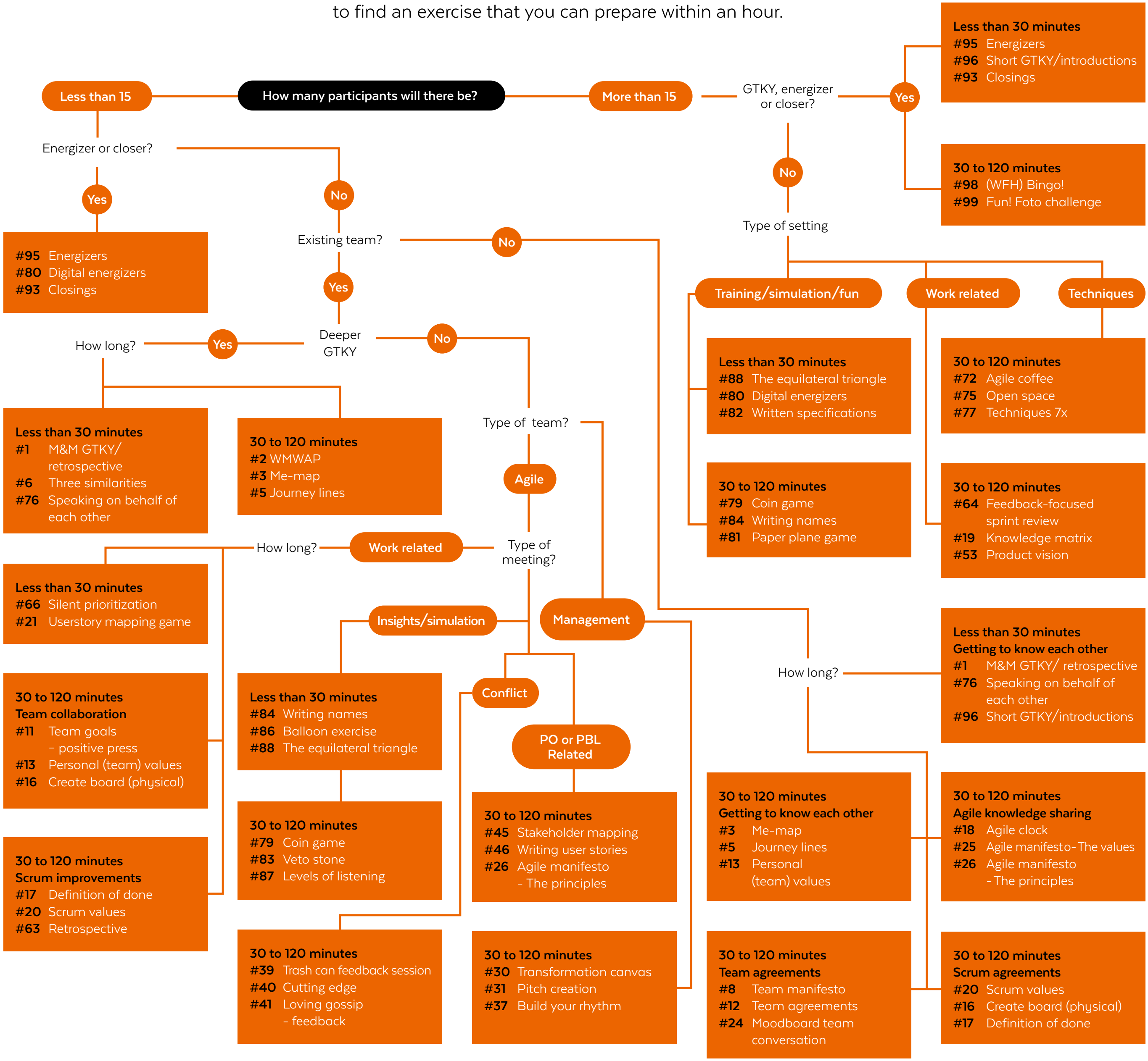
Hopefully you will be as enthusiastic as we are about these exercises and training formats. There are no less than 99 in the book. You can order the book here.

A Kindle version of the book is also available.

Warm regards on behalf of Rini van Solingen Maarten Kossen Charlotte Bendermacher and Cleo Kampschuur

FIRST AID FOR UNEXPECTED SESSIONS

Do you have little to no time to prepare? Use this decision three
to find an exercise that you can prepare within an hour.



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FOREWORD

So, there you are. Next to your flipchart. A little nervous, but confident because you're well prepared. All your markers are neatly laid out in front of you. Stickies in all colors of the rainbow are organized in neat piles. You've already covered the walls with brown paper. Maybe it's an online session: you have designed your Mural in advance and a large grid of people's faces on webcam is looking at you tensely. It's your turn. You facilitate this meeting. You are the agile coach, or you are their scrum master.

You're expected to be there, to take the group along with you! That you can facilitate. That you're going to shine. To take a step together, in cooperation, to build either a vision or backlog for the product. Or perhaps there is a dormant conflict that needs to be addressed? Or is it a management team that is still full of doubts and objections? You're expected to know how to handle this. You are expected to be the guide for this process, this session. You are expected to be that master or coach who knows how to facilitate this process perfectly.

But how do you do that? Where exactly can you find the one exercise that best suits this situation and group? Where can you find examples, what exactly do you let them do and in what order? And for how long? Where can you find pointers and who warns you of the main pitfalls? Who or what is *your* guide in this jungle?

In recent years we have been faced with this challenge many times. And fortunately, not just us. In many cases we did this together, or we had experienced colleagues to fall back on. Every week we receive emails from colleagues with a question along the lines of: '*Hey, I'm going to lead a session next week at customer X, with Y participants, to reach Z. Does anyone have a good exercise for that?* And nowadays often with the addition: '*Oh yes, and most participants work from home... Anyone else have a good idea for an online session?*'

We realize that we have the luxury of a large group of colleagues. We can ask dozens of experienced coaches, who, with hundreds of years of experience, always have ideas or can offer inspiration.

Unfortunately, not everyone has that luxury. Many agile coaches and scrum masters are often on their own. They are *the* expert in their organization. They are always expected to know exactly how to deal with a situation. But where do you get your inspiration? Where can you quickly find a exercise that addresses that specific problem? Google? Yes, that might definitely help you find something. But you have to use exactly the right search terms. And hope that someone has bothered to write and publish a exercise properly with enough detail.

Hence this book. We wanted to create a compact tool with 99 exercises for the agile coach and scrum master. A toolbox that you use when you need inspiration. Like a cookbook: if you don't have ideas or inspiration, you go looking for a recipe. Sometimes you follow that recipe exactly, step by step. Sometimes you don't and you use your own creativity. Sometimes you also get an idea for a completely different dish, simply because you are browsing the cookbook.

Use this book the way you want. Let it be your guide to help and inspire you. Especially if you have to do it fast, and you don't really have enough time. In that case, there is a decision tree at the very front that takes you to an exercise that you can pick up quite quickly.

Is this book a complete guide? No, definitely not. There are countless other exercises. For example, there is a book with specific scrum exercises. In addition, you can also use *Liberating* Structures. And there are books with exercises that are not specifically intended for an agile context but can work very well in your situation. There are even books completely specific to online exercises!

And yet with this toolkit for agile coaches and scrum masters we think we can add something. Because transforming an organization is not straightforward. You must be agile yourself and make a trade-off in every situation to determine what is the best fit. Agile itself is usually too specific to be able to be used as a general exercise. That's the kind of situation this book is for. To help you in your role to further fill and expand your agile toolbox.

And if you don't need this book anymore, that's fine. Then your own toolbox of exercises is filled well enough. Just as with cookbooks, by the way. They're usually just on the bookshelf, too. Often unused. But they're waiting patiently. Waiting for that one moment. That moment you just can't remember. And that's when you grab it. You browse it. And you often find the answer. Was the recipe successful? Then probably that one book will be grabbed more often, because you know that it has helped you before with an important choice for the dinner table (or the meeting room!).

We hope that this toolkit will help you to become an even better agile coach or scrum master.

Have fun reading and we wish you lots of inspiration!

Houston, November 1st 2021

Charlotte Bendermacher
Cleo Kampschuur
Maarten Kossen
Rini van Solingen

READING GUIDE

This book is set up as a cookbook. The exercises are organized in categories. For a cookbook, these are often: snacks, appetizers, entrees, and desserts. Or: beef, pork, poultry, fish, and vegetarian dishes. So, when looking for a suitable exercise, it is best to look at which category it belongs to, and then look at the exercises within that category. We have chosen to divide it into the following categories:

1. **Getting to know each other** – exercises to get to know each other and understand each other's motivation
2. **Starting a team** – ways to start agile teams
3. **Helping teams move forward** – exercises to help agile teams that have been around for a while take the next step
4. **Helping management teams** – exercises specifically aimed at management and management teams in an agile organization, or those that want to make an organization agile
5. **Creating transparency** – exercises to surface dormant problems or conflicts within an agile team (or within their environment)
6. **Helping the Product Owner** – exercises aimed at helping product owners perform their role better
7. **Facilitating agile meetings** – exercises for typical agile meetings
8. **Facilitation techniques** – exercises that are general in nature but very valuable in agile (teams)
9. **Creative exercises**– exercises that are a bit more creative and/or fun to do and that have proven their value in working with agile (teams) in practice
10. **Nice2Haves** – exercises that don't really fit into the above boxes but often come in handy in practice

FIRST AID FOR UNANNOUNCED SESSIONS

Sometimes you are asked to help facilitate a meeting within an hour. And sometimes, while you are asked to simply be present at a meeting, when the meeting has started, they ask you to facilitate. For those cases where you barely have time, the first page of this book contains a decision tree that quickly takes you to 1 or 2 exercises that hardly require any preparation. Think of it as lifebuoy in case of emergency.

THE STARS SYSTEM

All exercises are classified into three-star classes, from easy to difficult:

★ = easy – everyone can facilitate this exercise

★★ = average – it is useful to have already done it before at least once

★★★ = tricky – these are workshop and exercises that require practice; if you have no experience, do a practice session, or ask a coach with experience to help you

WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

The main target group for this toolkit are novice and internal agile coaches and scrum masters. Specifically, those who are seen as *the* expert in their own organization, but who feel that they still have a lot to learn. Especially as an internal coach, you often see that the very experienced external agile coaches leave over time. On one hand, that's good, because your organization has to be able to do it themselves. On the other hand, with the departure of the external coach, your sparring partner and source of inspiration is gone. So, where do you turn to for questions or inspiration? That's where this toolkit comes in.

Does that mean that this book is unsuitable for experienced agile coaches, or managers in an agile organization? No, definitely not. Like a cookbook, everyone can always get something out of it. Even that experienced agile coach, or that manager who does not consider himself a coach, can always uses this as a source of exercises for meetings. So, it is always useful as a source of reference for exercises. Ultimately though, it was written for the internal agile coach and scrum master, who is occasionally quite lonely in their own organization.

While writing this toolkit, we did assume that the reader has basic knowledge of agile and scrum; that you know the agile manifesto (preferably by heart) and know in detail how the scrum framework works. Having one or more certifications is not necessary, but we assume you have the basic knowledge gained from such training. Becoming an agile coach or scrum master is usually not something you can do yourself without any prior knowledge or training. Just as is the case with cooking: basic techniques, knowledge and use of (kitchen) instruments are assumed to be present. All exercises in this book provide a challenge to get more value from agile events and teams.

ONLINE AGILE COACHING AND EXERCISES

Hybrid exercises are becoming more common. You cannot assume that everyone is physically present at every meeting. At the same time, for creativity and true interaction, most online environments are not the first choice. It's up to you how you deal with that. Some meetings can be fine online (or hybrid), and some meetings require physically being in the same room. The important thing is that you take the lead in that. Make explicit whether it has to be an in-person meeting, or whether it can also be done online.

In this book we have also included several online exercises. But actually, any exercise can be done online. Sometimes that requires some creativity, but that can usually be overcome by every agile coach or scrum master. The most important question should always be what the purpose of the meeting is and whether you can achieve this in an online setting. Focus on that. Focus on the goal of the meeting. The exercise will follow by itself.

PREPARATION

There's a saying: preparation is half the battle. That's just as true for agile coaches and scrum masters. And for the exercises in this book for that matter. The better you prepare, the less attention you have to pay to processes and tools, and the more you can focus on what is really happening. Ultimately, it's not about the exercise, it's about the interaction between the participants. Make sure you can fully focus on that by preparing properly.

This goes from practical matters such as meetings rooms, equipment, tools, and calendar invites, to deeper, more mental preparation, for things like dormant conflicts, fears, motives, emotional obstacles, and norms, values, and principles, among all participants. Sometimes you can't avoid preparing a session with all participants individually. Especially if the outcomes are crucial and the deeper issues are a major obstacle. Facilitating a meeting with willing and enthusiastic participants, that's easy. The agile coach and scrum master is also there for those sessions where it is not easy. So always prepare well, so you can focus on what is really happening!

When you get started with this book, we have a few practical tips before you start looking for the right exercise:

- Always read a exercise all the way through first.
- If you think you need to adapt the exercise to the situation, do so. Be careful when removing steps if you don't know an exercise or have never done it before. Each step is there for a reason, so be careful when taking one out.
- In the 'tools' section for each exercise you will find what you need for that particular exercise. In general, always make sure you have flipcharts, some Scotch blue tape, Post-It (sticky) notes and sharpies available.
- If you use sticky notes in an exercise, always explain the following things to the participants (to the extent that they are bored):

    - Don't write too many words on a sticky.
    - Write with a marker (pen is not readable).
    - Ensure enough contrast (blue marker on blue sticky is illegible).
    - One topic or items per sticky.
    - Pull a sticky right-to-left off the pile so that it sticks well.

- For each exercise, tell the participants why you have chosen a particular exercise and what you want to achieve with it. Buy-in of all participants to the purpose of a meeting is usually more important than the exercise itself.
- Make sure you master basic team facilitation techniques. You can apply these in almost all exercises. With this we mean, for example: dot voting, grouping, check-ins, check-outs, etc. We do not include this in all individual exercises in this book, because we consider these generally known techniques.

OVERVIEW OF EXERCISES

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

KIT 1
GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

#1 M&M GTKY/ retrospective
#2 WMWAP
#3 Me-map
#4 Ikigai
#5 Journey lines
#6 Three similarities

#06

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WHAT YOU NEED

- A large space (desirable)
- Stickies

DURATION

15 to 30 minutes

THREE SIMILARITIES

This exercise can be used as an introduction, or as an energizer during or after a session. You will look for similarities between individuals in the group.

BENEFIT

This is a simple exercise to identify similarities between people in the group. It provides energy, but the most important thing is that it creates a certain bond between the group members. This will increase collaboration within the group.

STEPS

Step 1: Explain the exercise

Make sure you have the attention of the whole group and explain that they will form groups of three people who have something in common. It doesn't matter what that thing is. It can be something personal, work-related or something very factual. For example, 'we all live 10 miles from our work'.

Step 2: Form groups

Give the group 7 minutes to talk to each other. Put up a physical timer on a screen so that the group knows how much time they have left.

TIP 1

Challenge the group to find similarities as interesting as possible in the available time.

Step 3: Share the outcome

Ask each group what they have in common with each other. You will notice that there are serious and less serious topics, and that people have also learned more about those who were not part of their group of three.

Step 4: Repeat (optional)

When you notice that the group is not yet done talking and it would be valuable to get to know each other even better, you can ask the group a question again. You can keep this question open, as you did with in the first round, or you can make your question more specific. For example: find two people in this group with whom you have three things in common outside of work or with whom you share at least two interests/hobbies, etc. Then repeat steps 2 and 3.

STARTING A TEAM

KIT 2
STARTING A TEAM

#7 Team kick-off
#8 Team manifesto
#9 Team purpose
#10 Teamcanvas
#11 Team goals – positive press
#12 Team agreements
#13 Personal (team) values
#14 First product backlog
#15 Teams formation - self organization
#16 Create board (physical)
#17 Definition of done

#10

★★

WHAT YOU NEED

- Team canvas, prin-ted on a big poster or drawn on a flip chart or brown paper
- Markers and stickies
- A private space with a door and that is large enough to fit breakouts into smaller groups

DURATION

Minimum 3 hours

TEAM CANVAS

A team canvas can be used when creating a new team or with an existing team whose cohesion has been lost. This exercise helps to resolve conflicts and helps create alignment among team members. This way you can quickly build a productive culture.

BENEFIT

Creating a team canvas results in a poster on which you can see what the team stands for, who is in the team and what the team members can expect from each other.

STEPS

Step 1: Explain why you want to create a team canvas

Explain what the goal is and what you want to achieve by the end of the session. Explicitly state that it is important that everyone participates and shares their input. What ends up on the poster will be shared with other, but the conversations that help the team get there stay within the team.

Step 2: Start filling in

Ask each team member to write down, individually, on a sticky and within 2 minutes, what the team's purpose is. After that, make pairs and take 3 minutes to let pairs discuss their purposes and formulate a joint purpose. Then, take five minutes to let pairs discuss with other pairs and again come up with a common purpose. Finally, you discuss all these purposes with the whole group and together you formulate a final purpose. Write this on the poster. (An application of **#67 1-2-4-all**.)

Step 3: Fill in the team goals

The team goals are linked to the purpose of the team. Create team goals the same way you established the team's purpose in step 2. As an individual, as a pair, as a foursome and with the whole group to end up with a top three. Make sure that the top three of the group is truly achievable, measurable and time bound.

Step 4: Name team members and roles

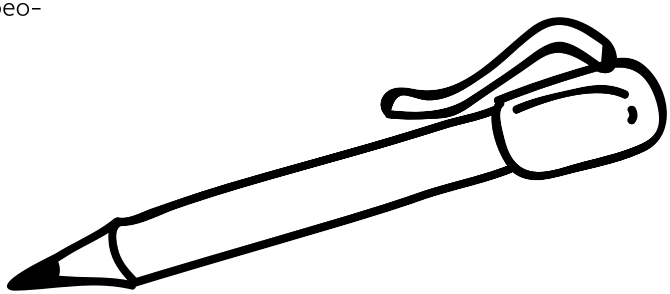
Then you look at which people and skills are present in the team. Fill out the people and roles on the team canvas.

Step 5: Create a knowledge matrix

Once people and roles are known, fill out the strengths and improvement areas of the team. For this to work it is useful to first create a **#19 Knowledge Matrix.**

Step 6: Fill out the strengths and improvement areas

Investigate whether the team has the skills needed to achieve the previously named goals. Do this in two groups. Group one looks at the strengths, while group two deals with the areas of improvement. After 15 minutes, the groups swap sheets and supplement each other's work. After that, the groups share the results. Make modifications where necessary.



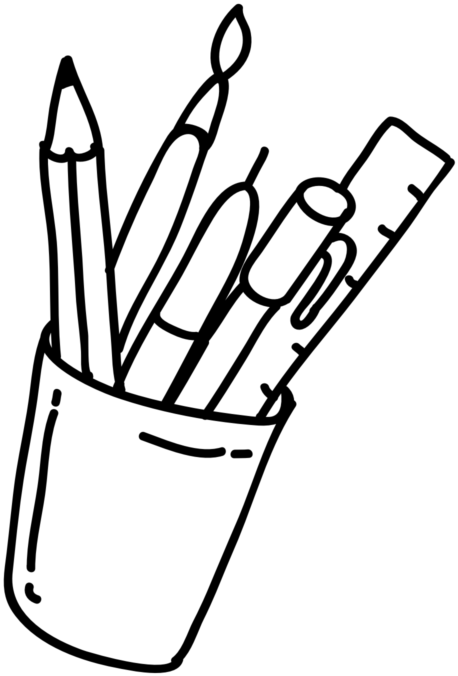
TIP!

Steps 2, 3, 5, 7 and 8 are also extensively described in this book as separate forms of work. You can, of course, use the steps described here, but if you have enough time or need more input/inspiration, take a look at the other exercises.

Step 7: **Fill in the personal boxes**
Ask everyone to write down their personal goals, personal values and expectations of the team and team members. Set a time box for 20 minutes. After that, everyone shares what they wrote down. Write the personal goals on the flipchart. Write down the values and expectations separately. See if there are any similarities and if you can group them.

Step 8: **Make agreements**
Based on the completed boxes, you can now also fill out the rules and action points box. For example, if certain skills are still needed in the team, what steps do you need to take to obtain them?
Let's say the team needs to communicate better with each other. Write down, with each other, which agreements you want to make about communication, for example create a WhatsApp group. Write down these agreements and action points in this box.

Step 9: **Closing**
To close the session, repeat the purpose of this session, compliment the team on their achievement and hard work, and agree to regularly reflect on the team agreements.



TEAM CANVAS

TEAM NAME

People & Roles
What are our names and the roles we have in the team?

Common Goals
What you as a group really want to achive

Values
What do we stand for? What are guiding principles? What are our common values that we want to be at the core of our team?

Rules & activities
What are the rules we want to introduce after doing this session?
How do we communicate and keep everyone up to date?
How do we make decisions?
How do we execute and evaluate what we do?

Purpose
Why are we doing what we are doing in the first place?

Personal Goals
What are our individual personal goals?
Are there personal agendas that we want to open up?

Needs & expectations
What each one of us needs to be succesful?
What are our personal needs towards the team to be at our best?

Strenghts & assets
What are the skills in the team that will help us achieve our goals?
What are interpersonal/soft skills that we have?
What are we good at, individually and as a team?

Weaknesses & Risks
What are the weaknesses we have, individually and as a team?
What our teammates should know about us?
What are some obstacles we see ahead us that we are likely to face?

HELPING TEAMS MOVE FORWARD

KIT 3
HELPING TEAMS MOVE FORWARD

#18 Agile clock
#19 Knowledge matrix
#20 Scrum values
#21 Userstory mapping game
#22 Userstory mapping practice
#23 User story detail
#24 Moodboard team conversation
#25 Agile manifesto - The values
#26 Agile manifesto - The principles
#27 Company safari
#28 Team dashboard
#29 OKR's - objectives & key results

#25

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WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Sufficient sets of the agile manifesto - the values
- Stickies and markers
- Flip chart

DURATION

1 hour

AGILE MANIFESTO - THE VALUES

With this exercise you let a (management) team think about the logic in the agile manifesto and what changes in their behavior may be needed.

BENEFIT

The benefit is two-fold. On one hand the group masters the agile manifesto (making sure that people know it by heart). On the other hand, a conversation is had about behavioral changes are required and the group can help each other with that.

STEPS

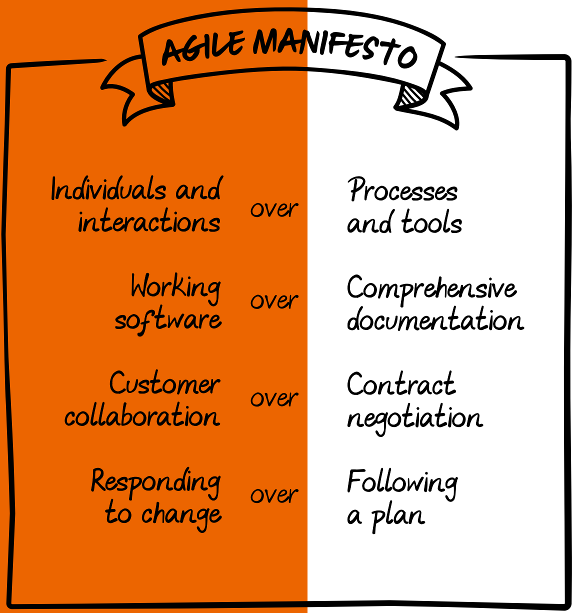
Preparation

Prepare a few sets of cards with the values of the manifesto on them. So, one with '*Individuals*' *and*, one with '*Interactions*', one with 'Processes', *and* one with '*Tools*'. Do that for all four values. Assume three to four people per group. So, for 25 participants you make seven to eight sets of cards.

Step 1: Instruct the group to reproduce the manifesto

Explain (if they don't know already) that the agile manifesto has four values, an ordered list where the value on the left is more important than the value on the right. Then, on a flip chart sheet, let the group reproduce the agile manifesto, as they think it should look (without consulting the internet).

Step 2: **Present the agile manifesto and explain the order**
Emphasize left over right, as the left is considered more agile than the right. Also, explain the order the values are in. Understanding each other first is more important than anything, and, as a team, you have to translate that into value as quickly as you can. You can then test that with your customers and convert their feedback into a working result again. Add that true agility (responding to change) only comes in fourth and the first three are therefore preconditions.



Step 3: **Ask for the importance of the right side**
One more, explain that we prefer things on the left over things on the right. Then tell that at the bottom of the manifesto is the following sentence: “That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more. “ Then ask the group what the value is of the items on the right side. Let them jointly conclude that the right side supports the left side: the right provides the structure and assurances for the left.

Step 4: **Start the conversation**
Facilitate a discussion of behavior based on the manifesto. How does this group, or each person individually, usually behave according to the right side of the manifesto, and how can they change that behavior to be more “left-side” behavior? Conclude by emphasizing that the four values are the value system for the agile mindset, and that it is difficult to learn new behaviors without having internalized them. So: they have to know these values by heart!

TIP!
Make sure you really know the manifesto by heart. Front to back, left to right and vice versa. Without that, this exercise is difficult to carry out.

Also, prepare examples for each of the four values of the manifesto, preferably real-world examples, or examples that everyone can relate to:

- Value 1: it is better to get a group of people together for a conversation, rather than sending them an e-mail. Or that knowledge transfer between people is much more effective when conveyed face-to-face using a whiteboard compared to sending documents and having everyone reading it individually.
- Value 2: it is better to have a short one-pager to get started rather than creating a lengthy document filled with specifications before you start building. Or, that this is similar to IKEA furniture: the left side is a chest of drawers assembled in your bedroom, the right side is the booklet with instructions – both are valuable, but the left is more valuable.
- Value 3: that despite all signed agreements and documents, real customer satisfaction is not determined by a contract but by the way in which you collaborate with the customer. Or that this is similar to marrying on a prenuptial agreement: the terms are important, but they do not ensure a happy marriage; making each other happy does.
- Value 4: that you must accept not everything goes according to plan, so if change is needed you embrace it rather than fight it. It is like how we behave on holiday and at home: we do have a plan, but constantly adjust it if the situation calls for it. Would we be able to do that more often at work?

HELPING MANAGEMENT TEAMS

KIT 4
HELPING MANAGEMENT TEAMS

#30 Transformation canvas
#31 Pitch creation
#32 Gemba walk
#33 Value stream mapping
#34 Blueprint or charcoal sketch
#35 Agile leadership selfie
#36 Transformation roadmap
#37 Build your rhythm

#30

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WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Brown paper
- Markers and stickies

DURATION

2 hours

TRANSFORMATION CANVAS

On a transformation canvas you work out a visual outline of the most important goals and preconditions of an agile transformation.

BENEFIT

The greatest added value lies in the conversation and the mutual coordination during the creation / filling in of the canvas. This creates an unambiguous and shared picture of an agile transformation.

STEPS

Creating a transformation canvas can be done as a fill-in exercise or as part of a workshop.

Step 1: Hang a blank canvas

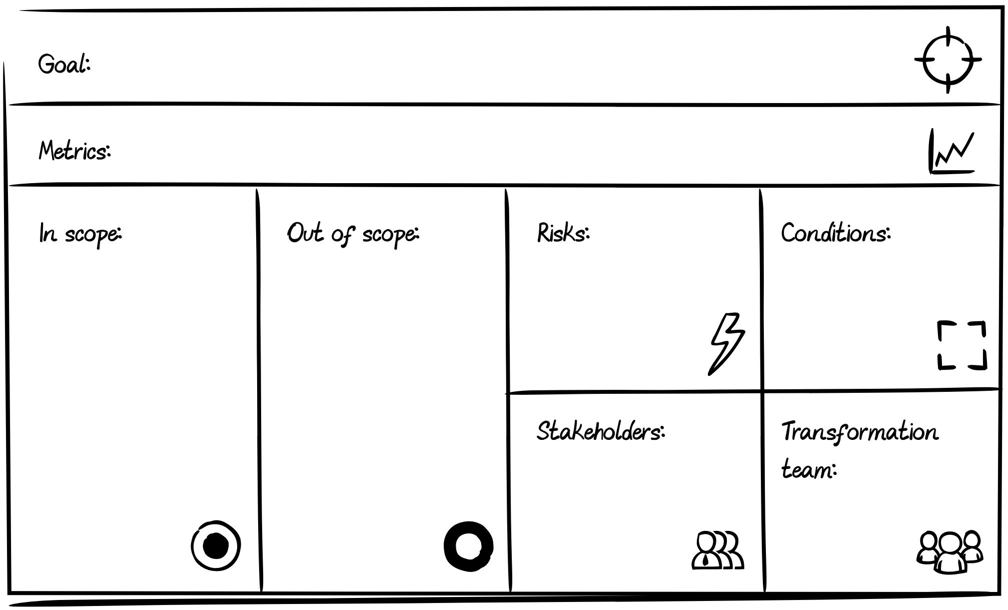
Create a canvas for your transformation in accordance with the example on the right. Feel free to modify this if you feel something is missing. You can also leave part out but remember that these are chosen based on real-life experience. Work with brown paper, flip charts, stickies, and so on. Remember that the canvas will change over time and can be made into a neat, printed poster later, so no need to gold plate it.

TIP 1

Above all, spend extra time on the transformation canvas if you feel it's not sufficiently clear yet. Without clarity, you run the risk of continuing the transformation by taking unnecessary steps due to unclarity.

Step 2: **Fill in the canvas together**

Fill in the canvas step by step with everyone involved. Preferably do this while all standing up. Filling it out collaboratively creates a shared image. Additionally, this way any assumptions and pain points will surface early on. You can fill in each category together or create parallel groups that each take a category and then share back the results to the entire group. Work in short iterations of 10 to 15 minutes. Filling in the canvas properly takes several iterations. Continued interaction and revisions are the only way to build a shared picture in the group.



TIP 2

Collaboratively creating the canvas helps created a common vision on how to move forward. This helps speed up the transformation, as everyone knows where the organization is heading.

Step 3: Review the canvas
Since the canvas will also serve as a communication tool, it must be clear to everyone. Therefore, consciously consider clarity. Do you picture yourself to be a certain stakeholder or persona, and ask yourself for each category: what exactly is this telling me? Can I interpret this differently than intended? If necessary, adjust the canvas.

Step 4: Reduce and simplify
Usually, those involved tend to be as thorough as possible when filling in the canvas. However, a lot of detail and content is counterproductive. Therefore, perform a simplification iteration. For everything on the canvas ask yourself: what would go wrong if we reduce or remove this?

Step 5: Make the canvas visible
Physically put the canvas up on a wall, preferably in a central place where lots of people can see it or pass by it. As a result, everyone becomes familiar with it, and it might trigger feedback from people in the organization. The broader the support for the transformation, the better!

Step 6: Update the canvas
Adjust the canvas if it is useful for the transformation. Ultimately, it is a tool to provide an overview of the full transformation and to make the vision for the transformation specific and transparent.

COMPONENTS OF A TRANSFORMATION CANVAS

Goal of the transformation: what do we want to achieve? What problem do we want to solve? Where do we want to go? This goal should be inspiring and concise.

Metrics/Key Value Indicators: how do we quantitatively determine whether we achieve the desired results? For example, what is the definition of success? How do we show that things are going well (or not well)?

Within scope: what is the expected breadth and depth of the transformation? How long is it expected to take?

Outside scope: what falls outside the scope of the transformation, and how do we deal with it? What and who do we explicitly NOT focus on (yet)?

Preconditions: what does it take to be successful? What things are being consciously worked on to make the transformation a success?

Risks: what transformation risks do we see? Which risks are deliberately monitored?

Transformation team: who owns the transformation? Who is part of this team? Which expertise do we need? How can these people be reached? Will they actually be available and approachable?

Stakeholders: who are the key stakeholders for the transformation and how are they involved? If necessary, create a separate
#45 Stakeholder mapping.

CREATING TRANSPARENCY

KIT 5
CREATING TRANSPARENCY

#42

★★

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Flip chart sheets
- Stickies
- Markers
- Tape

DURATION

2 hours

THE FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

This is an exercise with which you map out team relations and what the team can do to improve those. The exercise is suitable for an agile team that has trouble collaborating. But it is also a fun way to share knowledge with scrum masters or coaches and to learn exercises from each other.

BENEFIT

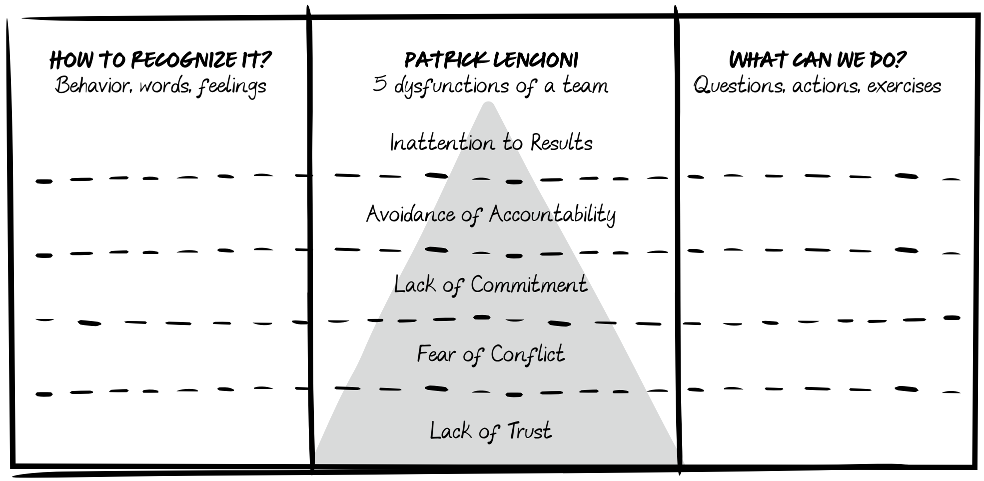
Insight into collaboration within the team and the trust relationships in a team. It strengthens a team to talk about those things. The participants get to know the pyramid of Lencioni, which helps to recognize team dysfunctions as well as dysfunctional behavior of individual team members.

In addition, this exercise will result in a list of improvement actions for the team to take.

STEPS

Preparation

Prepare the following flip chart sheets:



TIP 1

Do this exercise with a group of scrum masters and/or agile coaches. Focus not on the collaboration between them, but on what they see in their teams. Focus on the symptoms of the five layers and how to recognize them in teams. For example, what do teams say when there's a lack of trust?

Step 1: Briefly explain the theory
When you are going to do this exercise, it is important that you have some knowledge about the theory yourself. You could either read the book or do research on the internet. There's plenty to find about it. If you do not have time for this, you can ask someone with knowledge to help facilitate. During this short introduction, give participants insights into the different layers, how those layers influence each other and how that affects how you work together as a team.

Step 2: See how to recognize each layer
Give everyone in the group stickies and a marker and ask them to write down for themselves, layer by layer, how they *recognize*, for example, lack of trust. What behavior do they see in their team? Are certain things said regularly? At what times is there a clear lack of trust? Can you describe a situation that occurs regularly? Do this for each layer of the pyramid and give the participants 20 minutes for this.

TIP 2
Buy Patrick Lencioni's book, The Five Dys-functions of a Team, for all participants and give this to them as a surprise at the end of the session.

Step 3: Discuss the stickies
Walk through the stickies layer by layer and group where needed. You do this by sharing stories, so that the group builds a common picture of what each layer in the pyramid means. Avoid discussing specific cases in detail. If that may happen, stop the conversation, and remind everyone that it is not about the specific case, but about building a common image of the pyramid.

Step 4: Discuss insights
When all the layers have been discussed, it is good to do a short survey. Ask ques-tions such as: 'what does this overview do to you?', 'are there surprising things?', 'do you understand the layering in the model?' etc. This finalizes the first iterati-on of the poster.

Step 5: Take inventory of actions
Once it is clear which dysfunctions this team suffers from most, you can help the team overcome them. This step is almost the same as step 4, however now you ask the group to split up in duos and come up with action items for each layer. Tell them if they cannot come up with an action, they may also write down a re-quest for help. For example, 'seeking help in learning to give each other constructive feedback'.

Step 6: Discuss actions
This step is very similar to step 3. Walk through the stickies and group or supple-ment where necessary. Remind everyone not to go into too much detail or attempt to resolve problems on the spot. This step is still about creating a common picture of the dysfunctions in the team and what to do about it.

Step 7: Select actions
The team now chooses the action that will benefit them the most. This can be an action the team takes itself, or someo-ne from the team must take, or a request for help from others. Most teams find this difficult, so actively facilitate this. You may also ask the question: 'Who are you going to ask to help you with that action?' To choose the best action you can use technique 1 Dot voting from **#77.**

HELPING THE PRODUCT OWNER

KIT 6
HELPING THE PRODUCT OWNER

#45

★

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Flip chart sheet
- Markers and stickies

DURATION

1 hour

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Every change or project has many stakeholders. Some are very visible, others are not. Some have a lot of direct influence; others have a more indirect influence. Who you give most attention and how should be a conscious decision as part of stakeholder management. With an up-to-date stakeholder map, you keep a maintain overview of the most important stakeholders.

BENEFIT

A clear overview of your key stakeholders within the total spectrum makes you aware of the difference between 'power' and 'interest'. In addition, it stimulates more effective communication and collaboration with stakeholders and is a useful tool for product owners as part of stakeholder management.

STEPS

Step 1: Identify stakeholders

Brainstorm with the team about who are your stakeholders. Who influences the team, who has an interest in the success of the team, who talks to the team often? Have them write names (not departments or functions) on stickies and collect them on a flip chart sheet; always one name per sticky.

TIP 1

Create a separate (anonymized) stakeholder map to discuss with the stakeholders. On this map, you can include departments, customer organizations or teams and the name of the relevant stakeholder.

TIP 2

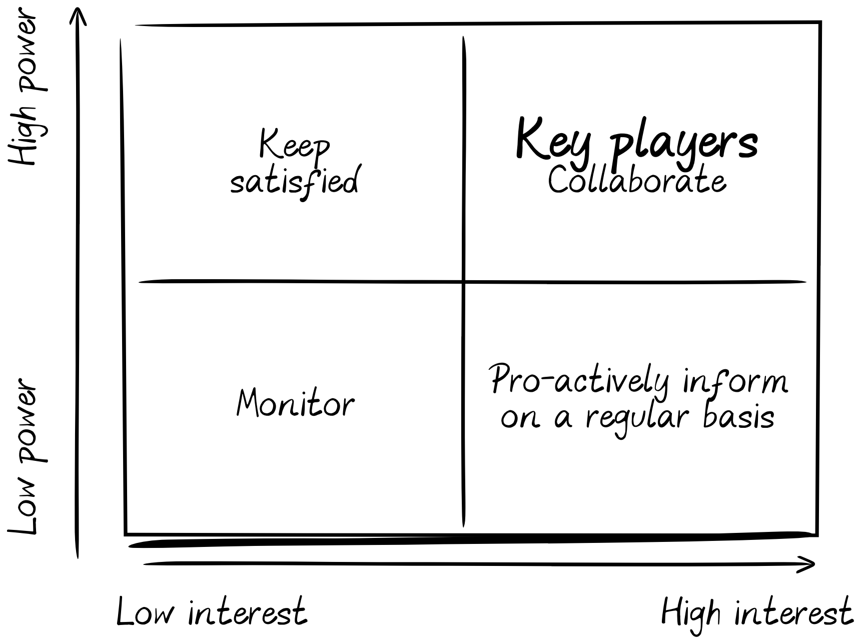
Use red or green lines to make it clear which stakeholders influence each other positively or negatively. How some decide is sometimes strongly influenced by the choice of other stakeholders.

Step 2: Plot the stakeholders

Draw a quadrant on a flip chart sheet with two axes: 'power' and 'interest', with the scale from low to high for both. With the team, map stakeholders on this quadrant. Do this collaboratively, with everyone taking turns putting up a stakeholder. Avoid discussion and instruct participants to only ask questions if they don't understand something. You will answer any questions briefly.

Step 3: Analyze the quadrants

Discuss with the team how they want to deal with stakeholders in each quadrant. What attention should each group receive and when, and will that work out in practice? Often the team will realize that they forgot to keep certain key stakeholders involved. Or they notice that they spend a lot of time on relatively unimportant stakeholders at the expense of the important ones.



TIP 3

Specifically consider stakeholders in the upper left quadrant (high power with low interest). If they suddenly get a higher stake, they jump over to the quadrant with key players. If you still have to *start* involving that stakeholder at that point, you're too late.

During this analysis, additional stakeholders can also be discovered, or it you might discover that a stakeholder has been plotted in the wrong quadrant. Adjust the map where needed. This creates a common image in the team of their stakeholders.

Step 4: **Talk to the stakeholders**
Decide in this session to discuss the outcome of the session with the stakeholders. Who will do what and when? What should be the outcome of that conversation? Do we want to give those stakeholders more attention or less? Also discuss the stakeholder map with the stakeholders themselves. What do they think of the quadrant they're in? What are their expectations around communication?

Step 5: **Make agreements about communication and interaction**
Make agreements with the stakeholders about the communication between team and stakeholders. How and when should they talk to each other? Are specific stakeholders frequently invited to sprint reviews or product backlog refinements? Also agree with the team to, for example, look at the stakeholder map every quarter, for example during a retrospective. Some stakeholders change quadrants over time.

FACILITATING
AGILE MEETINGS

KIT 7
FACILITATING AGILE MEETINGS

#58 Planning poker game
#59 Planning poker practice
#60 Product Backlog Refinement
#61 Sprint planning
#62 Sprint review voor multiple teams
#63 Retrospective
#64 Feedback-focused sprint review
#65 Continuous retrospective
#66 Silent prioritization

#62

★ ★

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

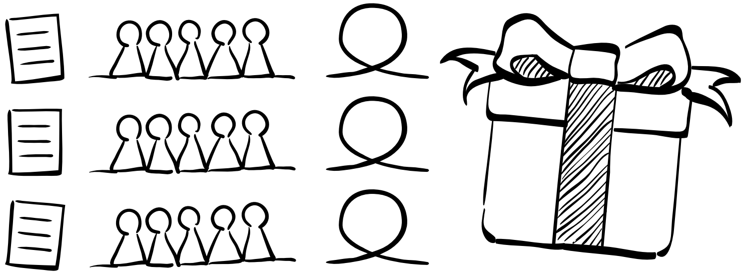
- Large space
- Projector
- Stickies and markers
- At least 1 flip chart per team

DURATION

2 hours

SPRINT REVIEW FOR MULTIPLE TEAMS

With this exercise you can do a review with several teams at the same time. For example, with teams that work on one product and therefore have one product owner. Or with teams that work on different products that are closely related and have the same stakeholders.



BENEFIT

By doing a review with several teams at the same time, you use your time, and that of your stakeholders, efficiently. In addition, the feedback for other teams can lead to new insights for your own team.

STEPS

Preparation

Arrange a space that is large enough for all team members and stakeholders. Also make sure you have enough flipcharts (to hang throughout the room), stickies and markers. In the event of a first review, let

TIP 1

Make sure there is energy in the group. For example, turn on music during the carousel or include an energizer in the program.

the product owner invite stakeholders at least two weeks in advance. Remind them of this. As with all other events in the scrum framework, it is important that there is a predictable cadence, so plan the review in a fixed cadence, so that stakeholders know the next one is, and the teams can learn in a stable rhythm and deliver value.

Step 1: Give an introduction

Welcome everyone, briefly explain the purpose of sprint review (which is: to get feedback) and explain the agenda and the division of roles. Use the example on the right as a guide or inspiration and give it your own twist.

Step 2: Look back together

Prepare this part of the sprint review with the product owner. It is important that they tell something about the past sprint, right after the introduction. What were the sprint goals, why was the backlog ordered this way, what went well last sprint and what was disappointing? It is best if stakeholders get an honest overview of what really happened. Perhaps next time they can help with the removal of obstacles or express their preferences differently/better.

Step 3: Demo

During the demo, the team shows what they have built. Consider in advance with the teams and the product owner for which products it is essential to get detailed feedback, and which are good to mention, but do not need to be discussed in detail. Please note that this part does not last longer than 45 minutes. Ask the stakeholders to write down feedback and any questions they may have.

Step 4: Ask for feedback

The feedback on the demo is the most important part. With a large group, it is important to do this in a structured way and to ensure that everyone feels comfortable with it. So, emphasize the importance of feedback once again for the product owner and the teams. A good way to get feedback is the carousel:

TIP 2

When using PowerPoint, make sure that the teams do not share too much text on it.

TIP 3

Give stakeholders the time and space to also talk to each other. In particular, conversations about prioritizing needs help the product owner to make the right choices in the product backlog.

- Think about how many products you want to get feedback on and make a flip chart sheet per product, with the name and possibly a short explanation of the product.
- Hang the flip chart sheets in different places in the room and make sure that there are at least two team members with each sheet to explain the product and answer any questions there may be.
- Ask the stakeholders to distribute themselves evenly among the flipcharts.
- Depending on the number of products, you set a timebox of, for example, 5 or 10 minutes per flip chart sheet. During this timebox, the stakeholders stay at the same board to ask questions and give feedback. Have one of the team members write this feedback on stickies and post it on the flip chart.
- After the timebox, the stakeholders move over to the next flip chart and get a few minutes to give feedback. This continues until everyone has been to every flip chart.

Step 5: **Look ahead**

Prepare this step with the product owner. Thank the stakeholders for their feedback and contribution, followed by a preview of what's coming up next. What does the product backlog look like now, why does it look like this now and do the stakeholders have feedback on that? Collect this feedback and have them discuss it if necessary. This is the right time for it!

Step 6: **Closing**

Close the review and thank everyone for their contribution. Hang a flip chart at the exit with a happiness meter and tip/top for the session. Also ask for feedback on the exercise to learn from and improve. For an example, check **out #93 Closings** for inspiration.

FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

KIT 8
FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

#73

★

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Space (in which you will not be disturbed)
- Chairs
- Optional: flip chart and/or projector
- Online timer with projector and/or laptop

DURATION

30 to 60 minutes

OPEN FISHBOWL

Three or four people have a conversation in a circle with one empty chair. The rest of the group stands around it and listens. The conversation is only conducted if there is one empty chair. As soon as someone wants to participate in the conversation, they can sit on the empty chair. The conversation then stops and only continues when there is one empty chair again because someone else leaves the conversation.

BENEFIT

Having a conversation with a relatively large group of people is usually difficult. This exercise ensures that everyone listens to each other. At the same time, everyone can and should have a say, without it becoming chaotic. The open fishbowl thus ensures a good discussion in a small setting within a large group.

STEPS

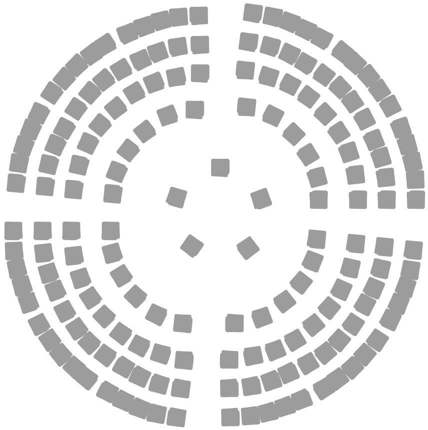
Preparation

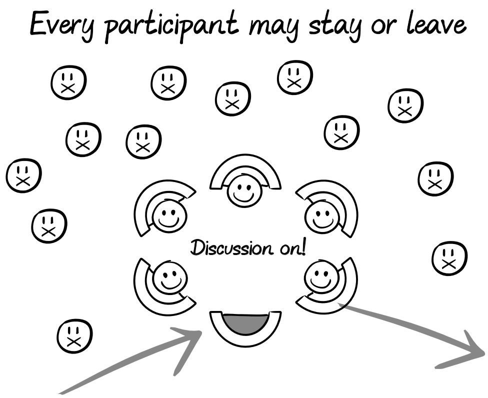
Put four (or five) chairs in a circle so that the people on the chairs can face each other. This is the inner circle. Everyone will be able to take a seat here. At the start, the seats are empty. The group is going to stand around this inner circle.

TIP 1
Would you like a slightly larger fishbowl? Then, for example, put six chairs in the inner circle. The principle remains the same: a conversation only takes place as long as one chair is empty.

TIP 2
Write down any actions or open questions on a flip chart.

TIP 3
Formulate strong or opposing questions/statement. Discussions are often more to-the-point when there's a bigger contradiction.





Determine the topic of the conversation and prepare the open fishbowl by formulating some questions and/or statements. Determine in advance how much time you want to use per question or statement. An example of a statement: 'The values of our organization need to be adapted' or 'Our team is no longer able to meet the quality requirements of our customers'.

Step 1: **Explain the rules of the game**
Explain the intent of the open fishbowl. For example:

- Each conversation is about a question/statement and lasts as long as desired (if necessary, use a timer visible to everyone).
- The conversation starts as soon as all but one of the seats are occupied. If necessary, ask three people (if there are four chairs) to sit in the inner circle.
- Emphasize that people only talk to each other as long as one chair is empty.

TIP 4
As a facilitator, be as invisible as possible during the conversation. At most, encourage people to participate.

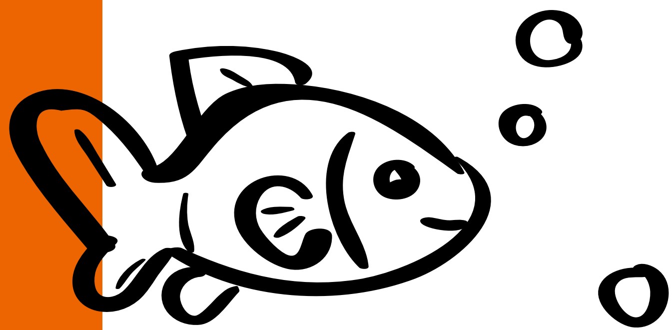
TIP 5
#74 Closed fishbowl is a variant of the open fishbowl. In this case, you have a closed group have the conversation, so that the people around it are forced to listen.

- If you stand around the inner circle and are not in the conversation, you listen and don't speak. If you have something to say, share, or contribute you can sit in the empty chair and join the conversation.
- When all the seats are occupied, the conversation stops until someone gets up. If two or more seats are available, the conversation stops until only one seat is empty. Does nobody take the empty seat? That means the topic has been sufficiently discussed.

In conflict situations, you can make additional agreements about respectful communication, but that is usually not necessary.

Step 2: **Start the open fishbowl**
Set the timer, show the statement or question, and let the group conduct the conversation in accordance with the rules of the game. If time runs out, you can optionally opt for an extension. Ask the entire group using, for example, technique 2 Roman Vote from **#77** (thumbs up = continue, thumbs down = end of discussion) whether an extension is needed. This way you ensure that conversations do not continue for too long. If you continue, set the timer again and when it goes off, close the subject. Move on to the next topic.

Step 3: **Closing**
When all topics have been discussed (or the time is up) you close the open fishbowl. There is no need to summarize or return to the content of the conversation. At most, ask how everyone has experienced this exercise.



CREATIVE EXERCISES

KIT 9

CREATIVE EXERCISES

#80

★

DIGITAL ENERGIZERS 7X

Energizers help you to change the energy of the group at the start, during or at the end of a meeting. Especially in online meetings, this is often forgotten, yet it is even more important there. Which energizer you choose depends on the duration and the group size. You can really go all in with energizer, but don't take it too far. After all, it's 'just' an energizer.

BENEFIT

The true benefit is an increase in group energy. When you see that people get excited, their eyes twinkle and there is (a lot of) laughter. That means the energizer is successful!

ENERGIZER 1: HOME TOUR

How many colleagues have you visited at home? Not many, right? In virtual meetings, most people work from home. So let them do a virtual tour of their house. Let them walk around with a laptop, tablet, or phone. And if you see something special, a painting, photo or work of art, ask what it is. You will see that you will look at a colleague completely differently. Do make it optional. Some people are ashamed of a messy house. For example, say that if there are others working from home or if there are children sleeping, then it is not necessary. This way you offer an 'easy way out'. But most of them will cooperate and it's really fun.

Before you know it, you'll be busy with guided tours throughout the meeting. So be sure to timebox those tours!

ENERGIZER 2: CREATE A FACE-BOOK

When collaborating virtually, you can work in the same documents at the same time via SharePoint, Google Docs, and similar tools. Create an empty presentation in such a tool and make a first page with your 'Facebook'. For example, with a holiday photo, a dress-up photo, or a picture of you with your family. Next, you let everyone else create their page in that document. You can also include contact details, etc.; whatever is useful for you and the team. Because everyone is working on it at the same time, you can see the document evolve. If necessary, ask people in advance to look up some photos. An additional advantage is that many people have not worked on one document at the same time before. They are now discovering how easy that is.

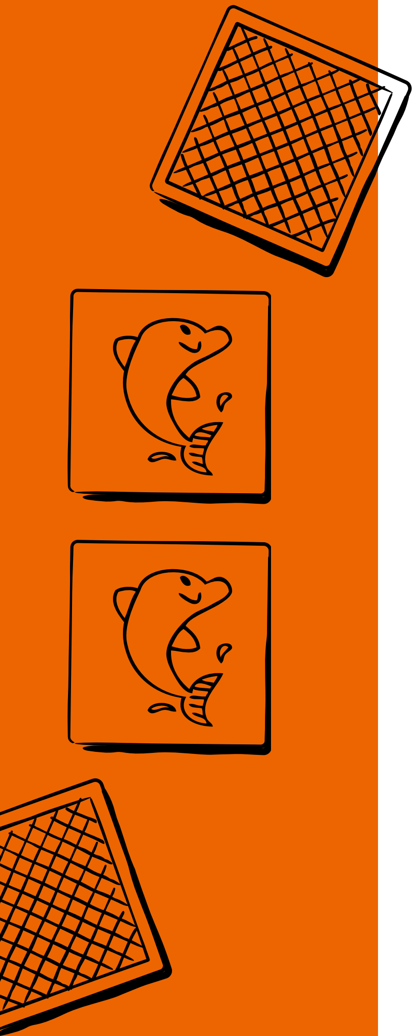
ENERGIZER 3: RUN LIKE CRAZY

This energizer is a competition with all participants in a virtual meeting. The person who can show an object first in front of the camera wins. From a box of pasta, a passport, a bottle of shampoo to rolls of toilet paper, a sander, or the shower curtain. Do you want to know who the real hoarder is? Then ask for ten boxes of pasta, five packs of pancake mix, or three full packs of toilet paper. Have you done this before with the group? Then write words backwards. That makes the first challenge to find out what you mean. For example, tropssap, repap teliot, xim ek-acnap or oopmahs.

ENERGIZER 4: CHECK-INS

Below are several check-ins that you can use both virtually and in-person:

- Draw an image on a sticky that shows your current status. Let everyone hold the image in front of the camera one by one and share what and why they drew it. This way you can find out the energy in the group in a playful way.
  Depending on the online tool, you can share emoticons or gifs. Ask with what feeling you start or end



the meeting and let everyone share their input using chat.

- Corny, but it often works: bad jokes! Google is your friend. Find a joke that you think suits the group and let it go. Timing is important, but risk is part of it!
- When checking in and out, you can use the ‘fist of five’ technique when using cameras. How do I feel? How busy am I? Am I fully engaged and focused on the session, was the outcome valuable, etc.? Ask a question relevant to the session, after which the group gives their own score on a scale of 1 to 5. Let everyone first sit in front of the camera with a closed fist, after which they all show their ‘vote’ at the same time after counting down 3 – 2 – 1. This gives you insight into how people feel going into a meeting and provides feedback at the end of a meeting.

ENERGIZER 5: MEMORY

Playing memory with a large group, online, requires some preparation but it is hilarious. Before the meeting, have people make their own duos. This way you don’t know what they are. Make sure that people in a text group or chat can indicate that they don’t have a partner yet. With an odd number of participants, you can be the last partner yourself.

Next, in the preparation, instruct each couple to look exactly the same. How they do this is up to them. You can raise the bar a little by asking to do so ‘in a way that others will never forget’.

Start the online meeting with everyone with their camera off. You designate a person that starts the game by calling out the names of two other people in the group. Those two then turn on their camera. Are they indeed the same? Then their camera stays on. The one who had his turn is allowed to continue with two new names. Was it wrong? Then the cameras go off again and the turn is passed on to one of the two that had their camera on. Keep going until all pairs have been found. You can optionally keep track of the score, but in fact it doesn’t matter who wins.

You'll see that most of them put something on their heads to look the same. Or put on the same T-shirt. However, some are surprisingly creative: two clowns, two Santa's, or two Teletubbies, nothing is too crazy!

ENERGIZER 6: PUB QUIZ

Pub quizzes come in different forms, so think about which one suits the group. For example, choose a specific theme, such as getting to know each other (let attendees send you some information about themselves), the organization you work for (look up some fun facts), a common interest, general knowledge, or of course music! Depending on the available online tools, you can further improve the quiz. For example, keeping score, after which you share the results per round (often a set of five questions) via a chat function, the camera or audio. Or use an online tool that does this for you (Mentimeter/Kahoot!). The most important thing is: have fun!

ENERGIZER 7: DRINKS

You often have a drink in a bar, or on a patio, at home in the presence of friends or family, but why not digitally? During the week, schedule a 15-to-30-minute "drinks" appointment, where it is allowed to talk about everything but work! Use this as a moment to check out between meetings or as a conclusion of the day. Depending on the time and preference, you can adjust your drink. No need to prepare anything other than sending out an invitation. Just let the conversation go the way it goes. If you notice that this is pleasant, you or one of the attendees can organize something fun. Be creative! Or let the **Energizers** from **#95** inspire you.

NICE2HAVES

KIT 10
NICE2HAVES

#94

★

DURATION

Maximum 15 minutes per check-in

CHECK-IN (PHYSICAL & DIGITAL)

A check-in is a fun and often very convenient way to open a meeting, session, or exercise. Several meetings a day, questions and e-mails that come in, the home front that occasionally asks something of you; you focus on many different things throughout the day! When a new meeting starts, your presence is important, but are you really "present" or are you busy in your head? A check-in with the attendees can be useful to have everyone be present. Below are several check-ins that you can use both physically and virtually!

BENEFIT

With a check-in you take people away from other thoughts and give them time to 'land'.
Depending on which check-in you choose, it can also help to start with humor, getting acquainted (when team building), or to get a first insight.

CHECK-IN 1: ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Print or write various questions on cards. Write down at least as many questions as participants with whom you want to do the check-in. At the beginning of the session, hand out the cards and let everyone take turns answering the question on their card.

TIP 1

Of course, you can also do this with photos of celebrities, animals, emoticons, or sports. Or maybe you have a nice creative idea yourself.

Think of questions such as:

- If you were to be on a desert island for the rest of your life and you were only allowed to bring one item, what would that be?
- Which (embarrassing) memory are you often reminded of by friends, family, or colleagues?
- What do people probably not know about you yet?
- What's your worst holiday experience ever?
- If you were to get a tattoo, what would it be and where would you have it put?
- As a child, what was your dream profession for later?

CHECK-IN 2: SHARE A PHOTO WITH A STORY

Let everyone grab their mobile and open their photos app. Ask to choose a photo that they want to share with the group and that says something fun or interesting about themselves.

These can be crazy, beautiful, inspiring, typical, or just fun stories. Depending on the group size, you can have everyone centrally share it or, for example, share it in groups of three.

CHECK-IN 3: SIGNS

Draw an image on a sticky that represents how you currently feel. One by one, have everyone show their own image to the group and share what and why they drew it. This way you can find out the energy in the group in a playful way.

CHECK-IN 4: EMOTICONS

Depending on the online tool used, emoticons or gif videos can be shared. Ask again with what feeling you start the meeting and let everyone share their in-put in the chat function.

CHECK-IN 5: JOKES

Bland, but they often work: jokes! Google is your friend. Find a joke that you think suits the group of attendees and let it go. Timing is important, but risk is part of it!

CHECK-IN 6: FIST OF FIVE

When checking in and out, you can use the 'fist of five' technique when using webcams. How do I feel? How busy am I? Was I fully mentally present at this sessi-on, was the outcome valuable, etc.? Ask a question relevant to the session, after which the group gives their own rating on a scale of 1 to 5. Let everyone first sit in front of the camera with a closed fist, after which they all show their 'vote' at the same time after 1-2-3. This gives you insights into how people feel before or after a session. You can also use the ro-man voting variant, where the number of fingers you raise gives an answer to the shared statement.

TIP 2

You can use this tip at check-in 1: answer questions. Grab a few generic quiz questions.

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Charlotte Bendermacher is an agile coach and trainer at Prowareness WeOn. She helps clients in their agile transformation in the role of an agile coach. By focusing on the people and teams, getting them moving, working together, and achieving goals, she ensures that the change takes place within an organization. Coaching, training, and facilitating people is where she gets a lot of energy from. Together with Cleo Kampschuur, Charlotte provides trainings in agile working methods. Do you have questions about transformations or just want to chat about the challenges within your organization or team? You can reach Charlotte at **c.bendermacher@prowareness.nl.**

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Rini van Solingen is CTO at Prowareness WeOn, where he helps customers make their organization faster and more agile. He is also a part-time professor at TU Delft and regularly lectures at Nyenrode University. Rini is above all a speaker and author. His expertise is the speed and agility of people and organizations. Every year he gives about one hundred and fifty lectures about this at knowledge-sharing sessions, conferences, and corporate events. His best-known (management) books are: The Power of Scrum (2011, with Jeff Sutherland and Eelco Rustenburg), Scrum for Managers (2015, with Rob van Lanen), How to lead self-managing teams – a business novel (2016), and Formula-X (2020, with Jurriaan Kamer). For questions or a conversation, please feel free to contact him at
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Or take a look at his website rinivansolingen.com**.**

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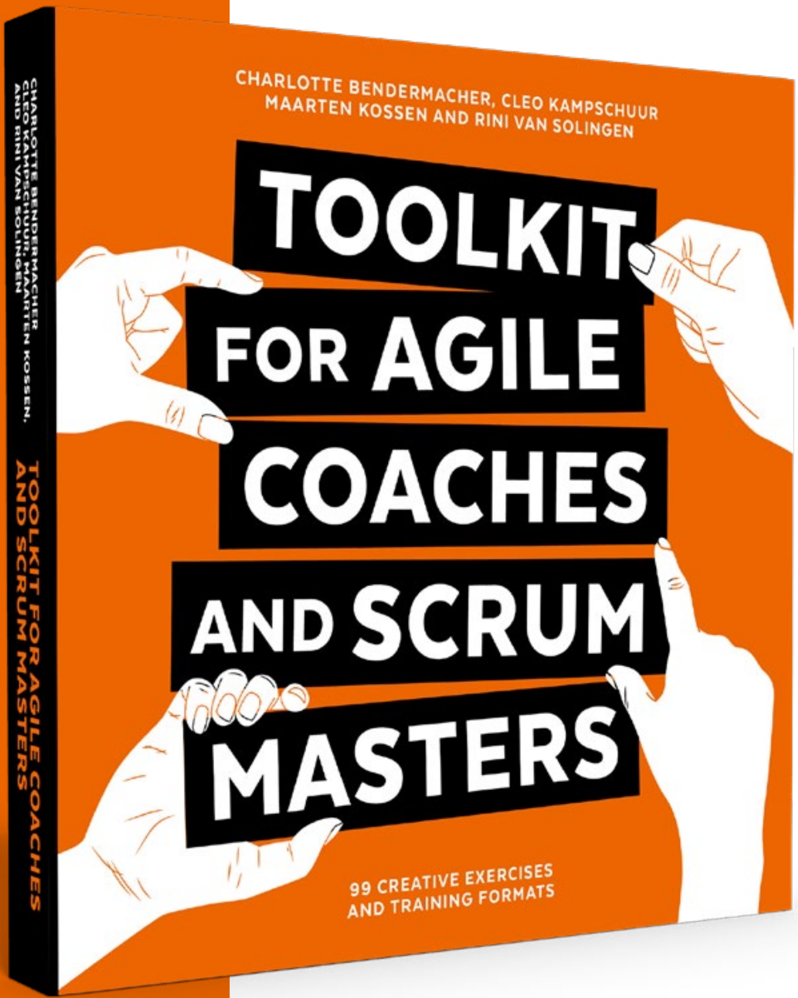
AND? ARE YOU THRILLED AND DO YOU WANT MORE? DISCOVER THE OTHER 89 EFFECTIVE EXERCISES AND TRAINING FORMATS



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Warm regards on behalf of, Rini van Solingen Maarten Kossen Charlotte Bendermacher and Cleo Kampschuur

ARE YOU AN AGILE COACH, PRODUCT OWNER, SCRUM MASTER, OR ARE YOU IN ANOTHER FACILITATING ROLE IN AN AGILE ORGANIZATION? THEN THIS BOOK WAS MADE FOR YOU!

Many organizations are switching to an agile way of working. Usually by using Scrum or a variation thereof. But Scrum does not bring agility itself; after all, it's just a framework. Ultimately, the core of agile working is formed by the people and their mutual interactions. What that looks like, however, and how you can best facilitate it, isn't described anyway. That's where this book comes in.

This *Toolkit for agile coaches and scrum masters* contains 99 exercises that have proven themselves in practice. This book briefly, yet powerfully, described these exercises in such a way that you can get started immediately. It also includes tips, tricks, and potential pitfalls.




Charlotte Bendermacher and **Cleo Kampschuur** are agile coaches at Prowareness The Netherlands. **Maarten Kossen** is agile coach and managing director at Prowareness USA. **Rini van Solingen** is a professor at the Delft University of Technology and is the CTO of Prowareness Group.

Barry Overeem – co-founder The Liberators

'The most important task of an agile coach or scrum master can be described simply as: make visible how a team or organization is doing, inspect the problems together and implement the desired improvements. But how do you do that? It's difficult, especially because every team and every organization are unique. Charlotte, Cleo, and Rini have succeeded in combining all their knowledge and experience with no less than 99 exercises and experiments. This is not a passive reading book, but an active workbook. So, grab this toolkit and get started! Your organization will thank you.'

Shanoe Biere – scrum master

'I recommend every scrum master to use this handy and beautiful workbook and to build on it with your own practices. With the many exercises, smart tools, and tips, you will get inspiration to make training and facilitating more fun for the team and for yourself. The power of a good preparation is that it gives you the space to participate yourself or to observe the team. This book helps you with this preparation.'