

# Introduction to Agile with Distributed Teams: Working with Remote Team Members

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## Agile Principles from <http://agilemanifesto.org>

- Early and continuous delivery of valuable software
- Welcome changing requirements
- Deliver working software frequently
- Business people and developers work together
- Trust motivated individuals
- Face-to-face conversation
- Working software is the primary measure of progress
- Promote sustainable development
- Technical excellence and good design
- Simplicity is essential
- Self-organizing teams
- Team reflection and adjustment

## Agenda

- Building Teams
- Creating Personal Relationships
- Encourage Open Communication
- Developing Trust
- Overcoming Cultural Differences

## Building Teams

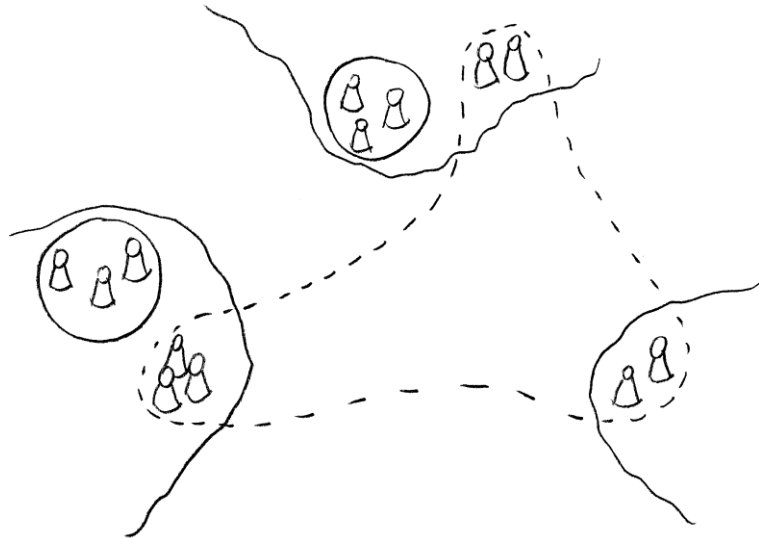
## Building Whole Teams

- **Avoid the typical structure according activities and know-how**
- **Instead structure along domain areas**

## Self-Responsible Feature Team

- **Comprehends (or gains) all necessary roles & know-how**
- **Ensures to complete valuable stories in an iteration**

## Distributed and Dispersed Teams



## Supporting Whole Teams

- Every feature team needs the product owner's support
- One product owner might not be enough



## Creating Personal Relationships

## Trust needs Touch

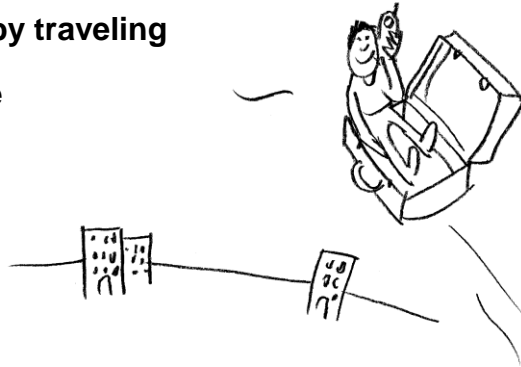
- Face-to-face should always be preferred
- Expatriates and other face-to-face options create understanding
- And yes, face-to-face has a price...

*“You will pay the costs of a face-to-face meeting, regardless of whether you have one or not.”*

–Ken Pugh

## Keep the Sites in Touch

- Ensure communication by traveling
- Ambassador at each site



## Social Connections

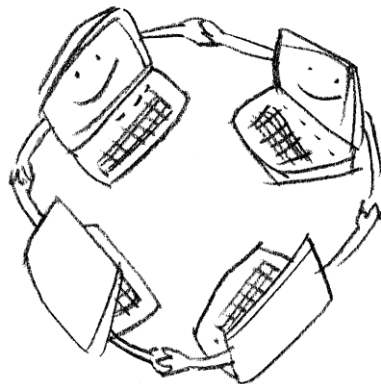
- Regular joint celebration of deliveries
- Sharing everyday's life
- Make traveling (more) enjoyable



## Encourage Open Communication

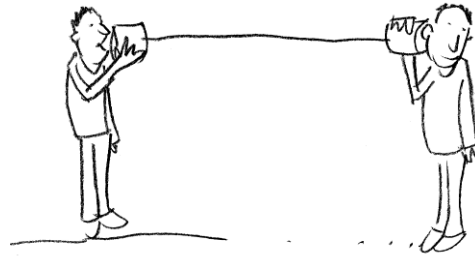
## Dispersed Daily Scrum

- Ensure mutual respect



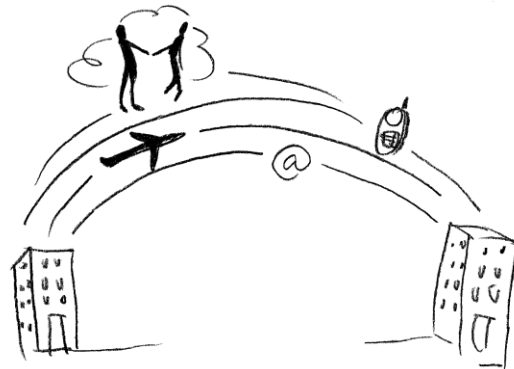
## Communication Channels

- Different sensory modalities require different channels
- Different needs
- Balance media



## Communication Channels

- Direct connections
- Synchronous  $\leftrightarrow$  Asynchronous
- Video  $\leftrightarrow$  Audio





## Tools

- Instant messaging
- Email
- Collaboration platforms
- Common repository



## Developing Trust

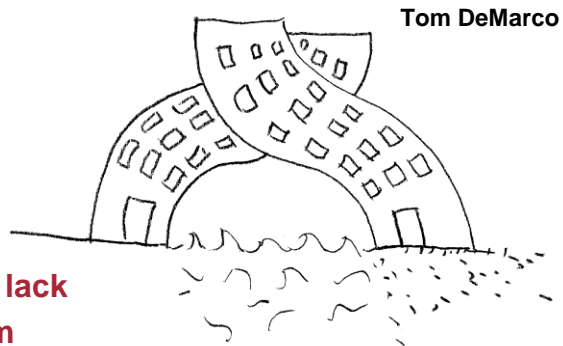
## Trust Motivated Individuals

***Trust always goes ahead: By giving trust you're gaining trust***

■ **Trust is based on:**

- Communication
- Transparency
- Honesty

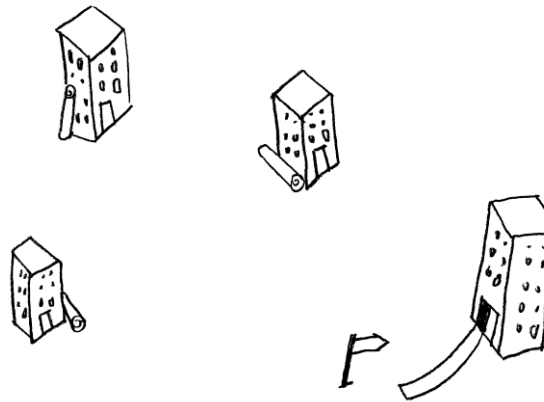
■ **People often try to fix lack of trust with formalism**



Tom DeMarco

## Trust is based on Mutual Respect

- **Different meeting locations**
- **Pay attention to the vocabulary**



## Trust Threshold

- Trust threshold by ignoring necessary proximity
- Trust can be broken in an instant

## Creating a Community via Retrospectives

- Regularly
- Different kinds of retrospectives
- Virtual retrospectives

– A new example tool:  
• <http://retrium.com>



## Overcoming Cultural Differences

## What defines Culture?

- Geography
- Language
- Strategies
- Politics
- Values
- History

## Some Cultures are Closer than Others...

### ■ Geert Hofstede six cultural dimensions

- Power Distance Index
- Individualism vs. Collectivism
- Masculinity vs. Femininity
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index
- Long Term vs. Short Term Orientation (aka pragmatism)
- Indulgence vs. Restraint

## Comparing Cultures:

■ Source: <http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>



## Who defines Culture?

### ■ You have to deal with different cultures everywhere

- Nation
- Company
- Divisions in company
- Groups
- Family
- Personal



## Focus on Cultural Similarities...

### ■ ... allows creating joint culture in terms of

- Language
- Strategies
- Politics
- Values
- History



## Effective Global Teams

*“Creating an effective global team from multiple sites involves several key success factors:*

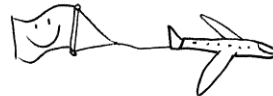
***building trust,  
encouraging open communication,  
building personal relationships,  
and bridging cultural differences.”***

Erran Carmel  
(American Univ.)



## In Summary

- Tools should support – not substitute – communication
- Communication is even more important in a global environment
- Only whole teams can take full responsibility
- Traveling is unavoidable
- Focus on cultural similarities



# Many Thanks!

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**Illustrations by Katja Gloggenießer**

