Getting to know “new-to-you” teams with self-assessments that are worth a damn

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*Agile Alliance 2018*

**Format**

- Guiding assumptions
- Vital Signs
- Values + Principles
- Gamification
- Data
What are your biggest challenges when starting with a new-to-you team/organization?

Time Box
6 minutes
Make a top 5 list with your table, be ready to share #1

70 + self-assessments
10 pages + 22,000 results in Google
“A beet isn’t just a beet”
Grandma Lynn

Self-Assessments

- Build trust between coach + new team
- Insights into team dynamics
- BONUS observations about org culture
- Enable team to be data-informed
- ???
- Builds social emotional skills

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Guiding Assumptions

1. Teams are best equipped to evaluate their own maturity and practices
2. Teams need to be in control of their own data
3. Leaders + Teams both need to do self-assessments

If you don’t believe that people can assess their current state objectively enough, why did you hire them in the first place?

—Agile Reactor
What is most interesting to you?

1. WHAT: games + assessments
2. WHO: aka the data

Vital Signs

- Quick + simple
- Sensitive to change
- Indicate when further investigation is needed
Vital Signs

The Happiness Pulse

How happy are you in your role on the team?
- Mostly happy
- Meh
- Mostly unhappy

How happy are you with the company as a whole?
What other vital signs do you use?

1. Quick + Simple
2. Sensitive to change
3. Indicate when further investigation is needed

Vital Signs

Agile Principles

- High validity
- Drives curiosity + conversation
- Can focus on mindsets or behavior
Agile Principles

Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.

Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.

At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.

On a scale of 1-5, how strong/important/active is this principle within your team?

What’s the primary reason for your response?

On a scale of 1-5, how strong is this principle within your organization?

What’s the primary reason for your response?
Gamify the discussion

1. Conversation is the goal
2. Co-create a map for how to get more value from agile principles + practices
3. Ideal for leaders + teams

Gamify the self-assessment

Games are often used to learn new things and to practice, where gamification intends to inspire and encourage behavior change. Gamification focuses on the intended outcome and the results, where games give attention to the rules and the process.

-Ben Linders, Agile Self-Assessment Game
www.benlinders.com
Play the game

2 minutes | Choose a game
10 minutes | Play
5 minutes | Retro the game

May 2017
Challenges we have solved
Mostly about sprints, stories, and prioritization
Technical practices + org culture

Off the table
Team size

Challenges we have
Challenges we have

Off the table

December 2017

Challenges we have solved

sprints, stories, and prioritization + TECHNICAL PRACTICES!

Mostly org culture issues

Team size

Which type of self-assessment should you use?
Ask the team!

More on the data  

Data = People
Why is the speedometer stuck on 35?

The car only collects speed data once a year.

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data to improve vs. data to prove

freshspectrum.com
the true outcome of a maturity model assessment isn't what level you are but the list of things you need to work on to improve.

–Martin Fowler
It’s about more than just the face-value results

- Participation/Response Rates
- Types of self-assessments the team chooses
- Willingness to share results
- Indications of honesty/courage
Outputs, Outcomes, and Why Your Product Needs a Theory of Change

Wednesday, 3:45pm
Marriot Salon 6

References

Twin Cities Agile Transformation Leaders Meetup, Fall 2017 (Happiness Pulse)

Ben Linders, www.benlinders.com (Self-Assessment Games)

Agile Reactor, "How Agile Is Your Team?" on Medium, May 13, 2018

Martin Fowler, Maturity Model, https://martinfowler.com/bliki/MaturityModel.html