Agile2011 Proposal for Workshop

Lean Procrastination – How Drive influences Management Overhead

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Marc Bless is a Certified Scrum Professional, agile coach and certified project manager with more than 12 years of industry experience. He applies agile methods in regulated environments (medical software and technology) and coaches distributed offshore teams.

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Olaf Lewitz works as an Agile Coach and Change Agent with Agile42. He’s a sceptical empirist with more than twenty years experience in software development. Being perpetually astonished by the ways people are made to work, he spent more than ten years mentoring and coaching a variety of businesses to succeed with changing the way they work. Olaf loves to combine ideas from different areas and experiences to create new solutions. Whenever possible he uses playful approaches to entice sustainable change. His motto as a coach is that of Nanny McPhee: “When you need me, but do not want me, I must stay. When you want me, but no longer need me, then I have to go.”

Olaf and Marc share a passion for combining existing ideas in unusual ways to forge new ones. Equally, they share a passion for games and their use in teaching the understanding of Agile. The idea of Lean Procrastination was born as a funny nonsense but through intensive feedback from the community suddenly and unexpectedly turned into something sensible, even a bit serious. We designed this workshop to have fun and to further enlarge our understanding of how fun can improve management.

Keywords
Procrastination, Lean, Management, Drive, Purpose, Mastery, Autonomy, Play, Gamification

Abstract
Procrastination is the psychological behavior to needlessly and counter-productively defer tasks. Lean thinking recommends deferring decisions to the last responsible moment and
delivering just-in-time. One is a burden, the other a management theory, yet both are concerned with deferring.

Enter Lean Procrastination. Not all To-Dos actually have to be done. Management of tasks can be greatly reduced if intrinsic motivation thrives through autonomy, purpose and mastery. So, what if by becoming a master in lean procrastination, you could not manage, yet still complete (not before the last responsible moment) all necessary tasks of the work you really love doing?

Participants will be introduced to the Shu-Ha-Ri model of lean procrastination which totally gets you rid of management if applied to work you fully enjoy and master.

In this workshop participants will experience the necessary amount of management in exercises with two different approaches of directive tasks on the one hand, and self-directed work on the other hand. On top of that, the use of playful approaches and their influence on effectiveness and quality of work will be explored.

Goals and Expectations
We strongly believe in the increasing influence of Drive (Daniel Pink) in the workplace. Gamification is a means to increase Drive. We want to prove two things with our experiment:

1. With more autonomy, mastery and purpose any given task will require less management overhead in execution. The truth of this is a center pillar of our Lean Procrastination model we will present and we want to prove it.
2. The building of tangible metaphors for creative and strategic solutions is a powerful method to exploit the diversity of a group. By opening the team’s minds better solutions are created faster. We expect the group that uses this approach first to create a better solution even with the more formal method later, and we want to prove this thesis, too.

Process / Mechanics

Duration: 180 minutes

Number of participants: 20-30 (up to 50 possible if necessary due to room constraints)

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<td>• Welcome</td>
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<td>• Getting to know the group (names, motivation)</td>
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<tr>
<th>10 min</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
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<td>• Explain Procrastination</td>
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| 5 min | **Prepare Group Work**  
|       | • Explain group work  
|       | • Form two groups  
|       | • Hand out material to both groups |
| 60 min | **Concrete practice**  
|       | **Time box 1: Group work**  
|       | Split the participants into two groups and give them different input, materials and outcome requirements for a similar goal: “You have one hour to design a new enterprise.”  
|       | • Group One receives a formal business proposal, paper, notes and pens and has to deliver an org chart, a draft business plan and KPIs to measure fulfillment of that plan over three years.  
|       | • Group Two gets a vision document, written as a dream-like story, and a box of diverse Lego bricks. It has to deliver a model of the business using tangible metaphors and in the end has to tell a five-minute story about that model. |
| 5 min | **Short intermediate Retrospective**  
|       | This short reflection serves as closing the first time box. The group should take notes on the last hour in their current spirit and mood as a preparation for the longer retrospective after the second time box. |
| 60 min | **Time box 2: Switched group work**  
|       | Groups switch exercises and start from scratch. |
| 25 min | **Conclusions**  
|       | **Retrospective**  
|       | Retrospective to answer two main questions:  
|       | • How much of your time did you spend on managing your work?  
|       | • In what way do the experiences of both groups differ?  
|       | • Define personal action item: write down what you want to do as next step or what you want to try  
|       | **Expected outcome:**  
|       | 1. The group using the playful approach to achieve the goal needs much less time (maybe zero) for management than the group with the more tedious, boring task and less autonomy over the way they work.  
|       | 2. The group using the playful approach first has a much easier go at the more tedious exercise, because they just need to rationalize their ideas. The group using the more regulated approach first might even have less fun and produce a less creative outcome with the playful approach.  
|       | 3. We suspect that the ability to master lean procrastination depends on mastery of the work as well as personal inclination, i.e. certain personalities might be more capable of mastering lean procrastination than others. The participant’s view on these suspicions would be interesting. |
Learning Outcomes

- Lean Procrastination is not painful. Mastery of Lean Procrastination can greatly improve your personal organization, given you organize work you love doing.
- Fun in the workplace can be greatly improved by playful approaches and using intrinsic motivation through autonomy, mastery and purpose.
- Management overhead can be greatly reduced when work is approached in a way that is more fun.
- Even formal or regulated outcomes can be produced more effectively and with higher quality by using a playful approach first.