Functional Management

There IS a place for it in Agile

Brian Sobus

Who am I?

Brian Sobus
brians@snowglobesoftware.com

I am an Agile Methodologist & Practitioner, a Software Developer, and a Software Manager based in Raleigh, NC. In these roles and a few others, I've helped guide companies, teams, and individuals in their development, careers, and decisions. I am President and Principal Developer for Snowglobe Software Development, Inc. and one of the Development Managers at iContact.

What's all this then?

- Roles of SCRUM
- How Functional Management fits
- The differences
- The needs

Effective management always means asking the right question.
Robert Heller

Roles of SCRUM

- ### Product Owner
  - ○ Responsible for delivering the release
- ### Team
  - ○ Responsible for meeting their commitment in a Sprint
- ### ScrumMaster
  - ○ Primum Attollo Populus – First, Elevate the Team (http://artisansoftwareconsulting.com/blogs/?p=75)
  - ○ Removes roadblocks hour-by-hour

What's Missing?

- Functional Managers
  - Why?
    - Remnant of conversion
    - SCRUM does not define
      - SCRUM is about the development of software. It does not account for careers.

Traditional Manager

What are the responsibilities?

The SCRUM Manager

- **What Doesn't Work**
  - Old method of "command and control"
    - Teams self-organize and decide what tasks are necessary to deliver features
    - Product Owner selects features for release
    - ScrumMaster keeps team on track by eliminating roadblocks
  - Decide what work will be done
  - Decide who will do the work
  - Track everyone's efforts
  - Commit to dates on behalf of the team to management.
  - Ensure the work gets done
 - Provide weekly status updates to management.

SCRUM Manager

- Give input on features and functionality
- Remove blocks that the team cannot
- Provide advice and input on technical problems
- Regularly meet with team members in 1:1 meetings
- Provide input on how to improve features
- Regularly meet your leadership team (Product Owners, you, and Scrum Masters)

- Keep up with the latest tools, technologies, and techniques that apply to the products.
- Recruit, interview and hire
- Career path development for team (training, conferences, etc.)
- Remove team members who do not mesh well with the team
- Stay up to date with the industry
- Anticipate needs (tools, skills, etc.)
- Budget planning and maintenance
- Hold weekly staff meeting
- Provide evaluations and feedback

The Two Managers

- ### The Old Manager
  - Distrusts the team
  - Enforces decisions
  - Commands respect
  - Controls the process, the team, the deliverable, and the effort
  - Dictator, Ruler, Controller
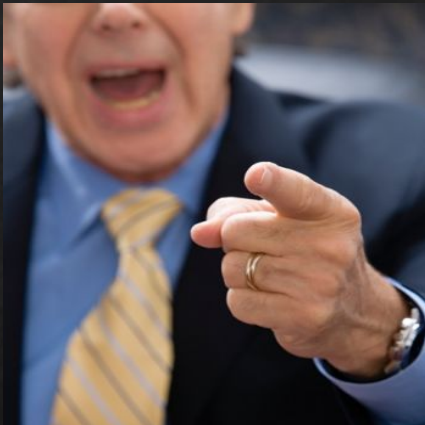
- ### The New Manager
  - Trusts the team
  - Relies on the team to decide
  - Earns respect
  - Has a team that creates and uses their process, that commits to their deliverable, and raises and lowers their effort to make their commitment
  - Coach, Mentor, Leader
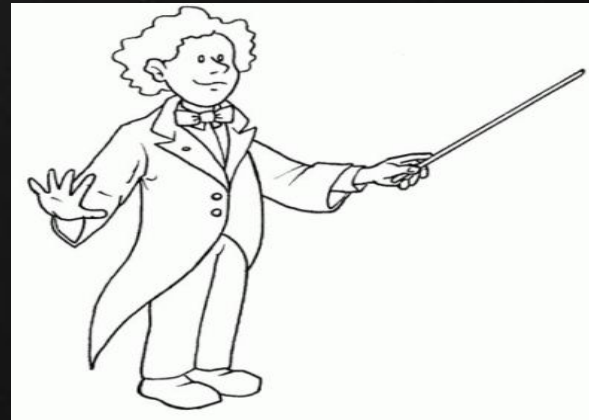
Shu Ha Ri

守破離

- Provides Context and Iterative Learning
- Comes from Shorinji Kempo and Akido
- Roughly Translates as Learn, Protect, Transcend
  - Shu – Traditional Wisdom
  - Ha – Breaking with Tradition
  - Ri – Transcendence
- Also in Chinese Martial Arts as Di Ren Tian
  - Di (Earth) – Basics.
  - Ren (Human) – Ready to Learn.
  - Tian (Heaven) – No conscious thought. Moves like the elements.

Shu Ha Ri Manager

- **Understand the basics**
  - Know where the gray areas are, but follow the steps.
- **Apply the knowledge**
  - Work within the gray areas.
- **Pass on the knowledge**
  - Teach the basic steps.

- **The Nuance**
  - You can have Shu teams and Ri managers.
  - You can have Shu managers and Ri teams.

The Job Description

- Build Teams
- Coach
- Partner with Product Owners and Scrum Masters
- Provide Vision
- Build Strategy
- Provide Leadership
- Listen
- Have Fun

Scrum Master,
Product Owner,
or
Functional Manager

For each scenario, discuss what issues may arise and which role would be best suited to handle.

A team has failed to deliver their committed features in their current Sprint. The Director of R&D is furious and is demanding heads.

Attrition is occurring on a team. Morale is low.

The teams are done planning. Their Sprint starts on Monday. It's Friday and a new issue has just emerged that the business identifies as the highest priority.

A team has "flipped the bit" on another team.

The business wants to release the product every month. The teams are working in a two week Sprint. They are struggling to estimate and plan for 2 Sprints at a time, but it's been noticed that they seem to be making features fit into 1 month efforts.

A team has reached the size of seven developers and 2 testers. The team raises the issue that it feels too large.

A team suddenly becomes aware that they will need resources from the systems group in order to complete their sprint. The head of the systems group is upset, but, even worse, their sprint is full.

You don't need a functional manager for everything.

A Different Question

As a functional manager, it is raised to you that a number of bugs are being ignored for the current release on one of your teams. How would you handle it if...

1. The Product Owner was refusing to allow the bugs in the release. The team was asking to fix the bugs. The Scrum Master was trying to facilitate an agreement, but to no avail.
2. The Team was deferring the bugs, because they felt that the business needed the features more. The Product Owner was accepting of this, and the Scrum Master was following the team and the business.

The Answer

It's situational.

For each situation, though, the correct path relies on the manager's ability to navigate the nuanced contexts that exist between the other three roles.

The Hardest Parts

- You are no longer the sole problem solver
  - You are a coach, a mentor, a leader, and a teacher
  - You provide opportunities for others to solve these problems
- It's situational
  - Who you are depends on where you are and who you are with
  - You have to understand the context of each situation
- You cannot use "command and control"
  - You are an influencer.
  - You want ownership and accountability.
- You are a servant leader
  - You empathize with others, you listen, you are aware.
  - You should look to embody the ten central characteristics of a Servant Leader (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servant_leadership)
    - Listening
    - Healing
    - Persuasion
    - Foresight
    - Growth (Employees)
    - Empathy
    - Awareness
    - Conceptualization
    - Stewardship
    - Build (Community)

What Do You Do?

- ## Ask the right questions
  - o Your goal is not to solve the problems, but to ask the questions that lead your team towards solutions.
  - o Become Eliza – How would you like to solve that? What do you need from me?
- ## Empower your teams
  - o Teach them to collaborate
  - o Allow them to choose their work
  - o Make sure they have interesting things to do
- ## Stand Back, Trust Your Team, But...
  - o Consistently raise the bar
  - o Challenge the team
  - o Teach them what it means to have a quality product and to be the owners of software craftmanship

Thank You

Thank you for your time. Any questions?

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