Performance Appraisals for Agile Teams

Michael Hall
Three Beacons
mike@threebeacons.com
214.783.3936
Introspective

Take the handout.

Write down some performance attributes that are measured at your company.

Think of:
• Your performance review process
• What is discussed
• What is emphasized
• What is communicated

For example:
• Technical acumen
• Project delivery
• Teamwork skills
• Career development
• Etc.
The Chasm
Chasm:
1. A deep, steep-sided opening in the earth's surface; an abyss or gorge.
2. A sudden interruption of continuity; a gap.
3. A pronounced difference of opinion, interests, or loyalty.
Traditional Projects

People Emphasis:
• Subject matter expertise (SME)
• Heroics
• “Individual Contributor” roles
• Individual training needs

Performance Evaluation:
• Innate intellectual ability
• Subject matter expertise
• Individual performance ratings
• Ratings against others!
Agile Projects

People Emphasis:
• Generalizing specialists
• Collaboration skills
• Customer focus
• Teamwork – mentoring, helpfulness, approachability, personality, etc.

Performance Evaluation:
• Innate intellectual ability
• Subject matter expertise
• Individual performance ratings
• Ratings against others!
Many companies shifting to Agile.

But, most continue to use their existing performance evaluation methods!

Why?

This creates a “chasm”.

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Role Play Example 1

Employee: Mike
Director: Volunteer

Listen closely for the “chasm”.

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Understanding Measurement
Running an organization without some basic measurements is like driving a car without a dashboard.
Measurements / Behaviors

“Tell me how you will measure me and I will tell you how I will behave.”

– Eliyahu Goldratt
Measurements / Behaviors

Measurements dictate behavior.
Measuring the wrong things can cause unintended consequences!

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Organizational Dysfunctions

Agile organization with Traditional measurements:

• Rewards the wrong behaviors
• Creates/exacerbates the chasm
• Individual stature
• Promote myself
• Me first, team second
• Me versus everyone else
• Desire to become an SME
• Worst: feeling like it is a ruse
Team Measurement

Why measure the team?

• Deploy the business objectives down to the unit that can make it happen
• Team improvement
• Identify performance gaps
• Identify cross-functional training needed
• Morale
• Others?

Challenge: what to measure in an Agile environment?
Challenge: how to measure the Agile team?
Good Agile Measurements

A good measurement should be:
• “Barely sufficient”
• Easy to collect and/or coalesce (<5 mins)
• Affirm the Agile principles
• Focused around delivering customer value
• Should not cause any “metrics dysfunction”
Techniques for Agile Performance Evaluations
## Sprint Report Card

**Project:** <project name>  
**Sprint:** <sprint #>  
**Date:** <date of sprint review>  
**Feedback provided by:** <customer or proxy name>  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of delivery in terms of prioritization, quantity, business need, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do committed features work as expected?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the time frame commitment met?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were any changes communicated effectively?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the UI intuitive, professional, and pleasing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall customer satisfaction score**  
<sum/5>

**Additional comments:**  
<enter additional comments here>
# Sprint Report Card Example

**Project:** Alvarado Independent School District iPhone App  
**Sprint:** 4  
**Date:** 8/22/2011  
**Feedback provided by:** Kyle Berger, AISD technology director

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of delivery in terms of prioritization, quantity, business need, etc.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do committed features work as expected?</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the time frame commitment met?</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were any changes communicated effectively?</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the UI intuitive, professional, and pleasing?</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall customer satisfaction score** 80

**Additional comments:**  
Background color is not an exact match as our web site  
Resources button is better on the main screen  
App crashed on the Bully Report feature on the second try
2. End of Sprint Diagnostics

Some “diagnostics” to definitely measure:*  
  • **Customer opinion**  
    - Using the Sprint Report Card  
  • **User story points delivered**  
    - For team velocity computation

* Be careful – only measure meaningful easy-to-collect items.
A Word About Velocity

“Should we measure velocity?”
Answer: Absolutely Yes!

“Should we use velocity for release planning?”
Answer: Absolutely Yes!

“Should we use velocity to help gauge how much to choose in a sprint?”
Answer: Absolutely Yes!

“Should we use velocity for performance evaluation?”
Answer: Definitely NO!

Why not?
End of Sprint Diagnostics

Some other “diagnostics” to consider measuring*:

- User stories carried over to the next sprint
- Defects carried over to the next sprint
  - Versus defects found within the sprint
- Impediments carried over to the next sprint
  - Versus impediments resolved
- Average tests per user story
- Others?

* Must be easy to collect, clear that it has some improvement value.
End of Sprint - Don’t Measure These!

Avoid measuring:

- Individual velocity
- Sum of all task hours for a person
  - Compared to 40 hours/week
- Number of tasks/person
- Accuracy of task estimates
- Accuracy of story points estimates
- Many others

Why?
A Few Words About “Social Loafing”

Social Loafing

• “I’m in a team, the team is getting evaluated, I can hide….”

Agile/Scrum combats this with:

• Daily synchronization
• Team member peer pressure
• Team authority
• Transparency
• Honest retrospectives

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### Project Report Card

**Project:** <project name>

**Date:** <date of project completion>

**Feedback provided by:** <customer or proxy name>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team's ability to react to changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness of project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of features delivered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of features delivered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of collaboration experienced with Product Owner and development team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall customer satisfaction score**  <sum/5>

**Additional comments:**

<enter additional comments here>
# Project Report Card

Project: ATVEscape Marketplace Feature  
Date: 9/23/2011  
Feedback provided by: Josh Arnold, ATVEscape President

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team's ability to react to changes</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness of project</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of features delivered</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of feature delivered</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of collaboration experienced with PO and development team</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall customer satisfaction score**: 93

**Additional comments:**
Overall a great project and a great Dev team! The high levels of communication and collaboration were quite refreshing to me considering my previous failed attempt with another company.

We did not get in all of the lower-priority features, but hopefully we will sponsor another release to get those in.
# Product Owner Report Card

**FROM:** Prod Owner  **TO:** Team

## Product Owner Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team's ability to deliver to their commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team's ability to react to changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team's overall technical abilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team's &quot;mojo&quot; (teamwork, collaboration, helpfulness, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team's ownership of customer needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall customer satisfaction score**  
<sum/5>

**Additional comments:**

<enter additional comments here>
**Product Owner Report Card example**

FROM: Prod Owner   TO: Team

- **Project:** Product Owner Report Card
- **Project:** OrthoApp
- **Date:** 11/18/2011
- **Feedback provided by:** Kaustubh Vibhute, product owner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team's ability to deliver to their commitment</td>
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<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team's overall technical abilities</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team's &quot;mojo&quot; (teamwork, collaboration, helpfullness, etc.)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team's ownership of customer needs</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall customer satisfaction score</strong></td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional comments:**

I thought the team overall did pretty well on this project. The team had some members new to this area so it took them a while to get up to speed and contribute at a high technical level. Also there were a few times where I felt the team was not truly accepting ownership of the customer desires. But, overall a good project!
## 5. Project Peer Review

**Project Peer Review**  
**Project:** [project name]  
**Date:** [date of project completion]  
**Feedback provided by:** [team member name]

### Instructions:
1. Fill in all sections for each team member, skip over your section.
2. If you did not ever work with a team member, indicate with "N/A" in each field.

**Name: [team member 1]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpfullness to rest of team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership of the team's deliverables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical acumen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to deliver on commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overal peer review score**  
[sum/5]

**Additional comments:**

**Name: [team member 2]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

... for each team member
## Project Peer Review

**Project:** Madjef's MusicLab - Android  
**Date:** 7/15/2011  
**Feedback provided by:** Jane Smith

### Instructions:
1. Fill in all sections for each team member, skip over your section.
2. If you did not ever work with a team member, indicate with "N/A" in each field.

### Name: Mark Brown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration skills</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Not very communicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpfulness to rest of team</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Did not integrate well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership of the team's deliverables</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical acumen</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to deliver on commitment</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Seems to struggle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall peer review score** 75

**Additional comments:**

Does not communicate effectively his impediments and stalled progress. He has the potential to be really good due to his technical prowess, but he needs to understand the team concept better. Several times I was hoping for much stronger collaboration.

### Name: John Doe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... for each team member
## Different Attributes for Product Owner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability to team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of customer requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Backlog organization, prioritization, and maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed of answers to team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Overal peer review score**       | **sum/5**         |

**Additional comments:**
## Different Attributes for ScrumMaster

**Name: <team member 4> - SCRUM MASTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Score (0 - 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ownership of impediments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to solve impediments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Agile methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpfulness to team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall peer review score**

sum/5

**Additional comments:**
6. Annual “Agile Performance Review” (1 of 2)

• 1-on-1 because of personal nature and team member likely worked multiple projects
• Performed by Agile manager, director, etc.
  - Gather and coalesce the report card data!
  - Average team score for all sprint report cards
  - Average team score for all project report cards
  - Average team score for all PO project report cards
  - Average scores from project peer reviews
  - Query key co-workers, POs, ScrumMasters for additional insights on the person
• Discuss what these measurements show
Annual “Agile Performance Review” (1 of 2)

• Identify how to improve the teams
• Identify training needed to make teams more cross-functional
• Honest and transparent discussion
• Both positive and constructive
Role Play Example 2

Employee: Mike

Director: Volunteer

Chasm or not?
Caveats & Warnings
Caveats and Warnings

As with any new approach, introducing an Agile performance evaluation system will have its challenges:

• Resistance to change
• Fear – too revealing
• Deflates the general optimism
• Loss of control
• Cheese mover comfort zone
• Etc.

“Measurement systems are difficult because unlike mechanisms and organisms, organizations have subcomponents that realize they are being measured.”

– Robert D. Austin
Conclusion
Take-Aways

• It is human nature for people to modify their behaviors to match the evaluation system.

• A very important part of any Agile rollout is to align the performance evaluation system (and other HR practices) with what Agile emphasizes.

• Not doing so causes dysfunction that will erode the team’s effectiveness.
Recap of 6 Tangible Techniques

1. Sprint report card
2. Sprint - a few diagnostics to measure and a few not to
3. Project report card
4. Product Owner report card
5. Project peer review
6. Annual “Agile performance review”

If you would like the Excel templates for these tools, please sign on the signup sheet provided at the back of the room and I will email them to you (please write legibly).
“Designing performance measurement systems for teams: theory and practice” – Jill MacBryde and Kepa Mendibil

“Appropriate Agile Measurement: Using Metrics and Diagnostics to Deliver Business Value” - Deborah Hartmann and Robin Dymond

“Designing the Lean Enterprise Performance Measurement System” - Vikram Mahidhar

“Management Challenges to Implementing Agile Processes in Traditional Development Organizations” – Barry Boehm

“Assessing Personality Profiles of Software Developers in Agile Development Teams” - VenuGopal Balijepally, RadhaKanta Mahapatra, and Sridhar P. Nerur

“An Adaptive Performance Management System” – Jim Highsmith
Questions?  

THANK YOU!

www.threebeacons.com

Agile Methods training

*All courses can be delivered onsite at your location!*

Establishing Agile Performance Evaluations

Scrum/XP/User Stories/Distributed Agile

Short term Agile coaching

Michael Hall, mike@threebeacons.com
214.783.3936

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THE END

Michael Hall
Three Beacons
mike@threebeacons.com
214.783.3936