EQUINOX IT

Agile and Scrum capability
improves significantly for government agency

Project write-up

Agile process assessment and coaching assists a government agency's internal project team to better utilise and take advantage of Agile and Scrum approaches.

Industry

Government agency

Methods

Agile methodology, Kanban framework for 'work-in-progress' and flow, and automated regression testing

Tools

Physical Kanban board, quick relative sizing of work, Jira software

Background

A small government agency team was undertaking a development project for an internal data warehouse. The project was using Agile approaches and had the intent of structuring and improving visibility and access to the business' large amount of data.

Problem

The existing ScrumMaster on the project was leaving and, while there was a replacement identified, the agency required Agile leadership in the interim to continue progressing the project.

Additionally, there was a need to review and provide an assessment of the current use of Agile and how they could improve to ensure they could self-organise and effectively apply Scrum principles within the existing project.

Work

An assessment revealed that stand-ups were not effective and there was a growing backlog of 'must do' items, amongst other things. Our Agile Coach stepped in to the ScrumMaster role for the data warehouse project and mentored the team in the effective use of Agile and Scrum approaches.

The Agile coach introduced physical work item boards to bring everyone across all aspects of the project and to improve team collaboration. The team fully reviewed the product backlog and sized and prioritised the items. Jira was used to coordinate handoffs between team members (half the team was on a different floor and one team member a different city).

Lean concepts such as limiting work in progress were also introduced, story sizes were kept small, and team members began focusing on completing stories, rather than starting new ones.

Outcome

With our Agile Coach stepping into the ScrumMaster role the team were not only able to complete the project, but internal capability for running an Agile project improved significantly.

— The team became faster, more efficient and output and quality all improved.

— Within 6 weeks the team could report on the velocity of their project, had much more transparency than they had before, and they had a better out-look on the project end state.

— Improved transparency meant senior management had information to make decisions and prioritise the 'must do' and the 'should do' items.

— Using lean concepts, the team could remain small and operate within its limitations.

— As a result of improved team performance and visibility of progress, project governance agreed to extend the end date of the project

— Internal capability improvements extended to other areas of the organisation, where the product manager started using physical work item boards in different parts of the business with other teams.

The Agile Coaching service was provided by Equinox IT.

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Carl is a Principal Consultant with specialist skills and experience in project management and agile leadership. He helps our clients successfully deliver complex projects, adopt Agile and Scrum approaches, and make important changes to their business. He has a passion for getting the hard stuff done for our clients.

Get in touch

Talk to Equinox IT today about how Agile leadership and in-house coaching can help your team when Agile isn't working.