Challenges submitted by webinar participants

Sharing written information

- Sharing information
- Taking notes

Online meeting fatigue

- Zoom fatigue - no more over the shoulders peer review
- Less face to face communication means more meetings to be organised
- Short - attention span
- Dealing with online meeting fatigue.
- Enough work time around meetings. Everyone is jumping from meeting to meeting.
- Days are filled with meetings to bring people together
- It is harder to step away from the computer. Long periods sitting to either do work on the computer or in meetings affect concentration. In a face to face situation, you can walk to a meeting room or to another desk to talk to someone as a break from desk work.

Distractions

- People being disengaged working on other things and not paying attention in the session
- people being distracted on calls
- unprecedented distractions
- concentration
- Uncertainty. > Are we all really focused as best as possible during work hours or are we finding distraction? How can you tell if workmates are motivated? How can you gauge if they need help unless they call out?
- making sure people are focused and not getting pulled in all directions
- Some people have many distractions at home
- Team members distractions
- Productivity in case of Work from Home and Hybrid model.

Camera off

- Getting people to use webcams
- Convincing people to use cameras. Repeating the benefits gets very boring for me and very tedious for the team to hear. They have all sort of reasons why they won't use the camera this time, and then not using the camera becomes the habit.
- Zoom calls with camera
- Gauging engagement levels (especially with team members not turning cameras on).
- Not being able to gauge facial expression when video is off (it is an optional for the team to use video conference)

Knowledge sharing

- Peer-peer knowledge sharing
- Engendering contextual conversations, knowledge sharing, cross-skilling

Body language - lack of/difficulty reading it

- Missing out on facial clues
- Inability to read social cues / body language
- Reading moods, reactions, interest level, body language
- Reading the room.
- Ensuring all participants are engaged
- Getting a feel for all the non verbal queue's
- The main one & possibly only one is that you don't get the body language etc from emails, rally, or team chats, so some things can be taken the wrong way.
- Having said that, a quick teams call with video on sorts all that.

Collaboration

- Collaboration
- reduced collaboration
- How do you collaborate effectively?
- Members not fully collaborating during scum session
- Collaborations
- Create Synergy
- Cross-team collaboration
- Team Interactions.
- Having free flowing idea collaboration meetings

Effectiveness and richness of communication

- Effective team communication
- Loss of richness in conversation
- Miscommunication over written text
- Effective communication
- miscommunication
- communication
- Communication
- Communication slipping

Not clustered

- Getting the senior leadership of IT not to give up on agile in this time of stress for higher education.
- Not being able to fulfil my role as a scrum master
- Am I being effective as a scrum master?
- What techniques, tools can be used to assist the team to highlight continued productivity to first line leaders?
- Scrum team unable to commit to scrum goals
- attention to results.
- No challneges as such..looking for more improvement
- Is it personality, leadership style, lack of trust, not seeing bums on seats?
- Peoples perceptions. The team believe productivity has increased and senior leadership has confirmed this.
- Detail Orientation
- Patience

Lack of safety

- Insecurity
- Hesitation to share, thoughts, responsibility.
- reluctance of less experienced members i.e. establishing a "safe space"

Technology constraints

- Technology constraints
- Internet connection
- Team members with internet traffic:bandwidth restrictions.
- Remote workers not being able to hear what's going on in standups
- Bandwidth is less than office so we struggle to see shared screen in our collaboration tools so pairing is hard

Tool friction

- Physical Backlogs vs Digital Backlogs and how to use both effectively.
- Lack of reliable cross-platform workshop tools
- Skype/phone issues
- Tools really showing their flaws.(e.g. MS Teams - Planner is an ass.)
- Physical whiteboard vs Jira subtasks
- Remote collaboration with limited tools available
- Multiple channels of communication to monitor (MS Teams, Skype, Slack, email) Other than that, I've embraced the new way of working and seem to be more productive, feel closer to my team and working more collaboratively as an organisation!
- Reliance on inflexible electronic tools (organisationally imposed). Oh to be able to touch and feel a real whiteboard and post it notes.
- White Board meeting
- Shared whiteboard for fast EASY ideas
- Whiteboard is an effective way to get ideas across and exchange ideas. The virtual whiteboard is not as intuitive as the physical one.
- Collaboration via online tools which would usually be done in person on a physical board.
- Having to manage a virtual board as well as a physical board.
- Online tools become very important for the collaborative seasons, any time there are technical issues it can take focus away from the ceremony itself. Ie calls dropping in and out, screen share not working
- lags in discussion on Zoom due to muting/unmuting
- Setting up asynchronous communication practices
- Keeping the jira board updated
- Which tools to address which problems? So many to choose from...
- People being unable to have a group conversation for fear of speaking over the top of each other.
- not easy to use whiteboards
- Physical borads are he thing of the past, all is now digital...showcase?

Trust and conflict resolution

- Keeping the levels of trust within the team. This includes Recovering from disagreements when remote. In the office, people might disagree on something, but then they are around each other and interact and recover quickly (they can see a grudge isn't being held). When remote, because they're not around each other they sometimes worry that the other party is holding a grudge. This happens in everyday life too when we have a disagreement with someone and then our paths don't cross, we think the worst, whereas when our paths cross, we realise that actually, people aren't holding the grudge.
- How do you build trust for team mates?
- forming trusted relationships within a mostly new team i.e. team building

Interaction beyond team boundary

- Stakeholder preparedness
- Interactions with wider community
- Interactions outside the team seem more difficult. The team communicates on a regular basis but the extended work network does not.
- Stakeholder participation
- Responsiveness of the rest of the org when it comes to trying to deal with blockers (can't just walk around to someone's desk etc.)
- Navigation through organization
- Keeping in touch with the wider team and community in Westpac

Ability to read emotions

- Being able to read the room
- Togetherness, really knowing how people are feeling, full collaboration between team members
- Dealing with low moods/different circumstances of team members.
- Understanding the day to day challenges the teams face beyond what they are willing to tell me,or even realise they have.
- Limited understanding of the current well-being of others in the team
- No emotional view of people

Remote facilitation skills

- Lack of remote facilitation skills
- Worksho
- Running interactive team exercises
- Facilitating design or ideation meetings (things usually done around a whiteboard)
- Workshop collaboration
- Understanding how to get the maximum value/benefit out of remote meetings
- Innovative ways to conduct workshop/planning sessions
- Running effective sprint retrospectives
- meetings/discussions
- Facilitating team progress towards sprint deliverables
- Remote planning both quarterly and sprint by sprint
- Efficient use of meeting time
- Keeping sprint reviews effective
- Big room planning

Alignment

- Maintaining shared understanding of priorities
- Team Alignment
- Team Alignment
- Communication - getting everyone on the same page
- Ensuring that there is alignment and engagement

Co-ordination between team members

- Effective communication on the fly to keep sprint momentum going
- People aren't coordinating hand-offs to other team members as well
- Coordination of tasks
- Coordination of tasks
- Roles and Responsibilities

Solo / siloed working

- Team members not using tools and working solo.
- Silos
- Feeling isolated at home
- Team members have their own agenda
- People prefer to work in their own silos
- Full team participation not happening
- People working as single units and relaying too much on Skype chats and not phone or video calls.

Transparency as to what is going on

- Missing the personal connect (not knowing how well they're with the workload, etc.)
- Spotting anti patterns outside normal meeting structures.
- work visibility
- not hearing what's going on
- How sprint backlog items are managed in Teams
- Identifying if anyone needs help and hasn't communicated
- Disconnected from the team
- Observation and Performance Feedback
- transparency of progress by teams despite standups
- Understanding how work is really done when joining a new team.

Ad hoc and osmotic communication

- Less collaboration/innovation (informal discussions) when not in person.
- Lack of information flow and osmotic learning.
- A lot of conversations don't happen when part of the team is working remotely
- lack of knowing when someone is free for a quick consult. You cannot easily see the status of people, to know when you can have the water-cooler chat.
- Missing the "overheard" conversations - when teams are experiencing challenges
- How do adhov brain storming sessions and casual conversations which develop into deeper understanding of requirements or issues resoltion, or casual whiteboard sessions get passed onto the rest of the team not in the office.
- Miss that colabing experience of hearing be seeing things that might be impacting the team delivering
- Less collaboration amongst team members due to not being able to simply turn to the person beside you.
- no more 'corridor chats'
- Loss of informal mob conversation / chat & interactions on the work- meeting reliance to engage, or moreover a feeling that is necessary.
- Creating serendipity and informal conversation opportunities
- Connectedness is the biggie as with not sitting together you don't have the ad hoc conversations, or the quick discussion
- Miss walking around and chatting to people in the office
- Not being present to notice and offer suggestions in coachable moments.
- Missing the incidental conversations from both the team, and the rest of the org, that could indicate their are blockers that need to be addressed.
- Missing those corridor discussions.
- having the short quick discussions
- In the moment coaching
- Delayed information/feedback opportunities. > In a shared in-person space your ears can pick the direction of a conversation amongst others allowing you to provide feedback in the early stage of conversation as necessary.
- Missing the accidental kitchen conversations with people outside of my immediate team. More difficult to get to know people in other parts of the business.

Accessing people at the right time

- Application of teaching moments
- How to effectively approach individuals as a scrum master
- Being able to reach out to people in a timely manner
- Cannot communicate as easily with management to let them know of issues
- Seeing when someone is not available to ask questions/talk
- Not knowing how to approach teams/individuals as a scrum master

Less effective communication behaviours

- Miss important info
- Meetings are slower and more difficult as multiple people can't speak at the same time over MS Teams/Zoom. The conversation is a little stunted due to this. Also, people are not comfortable with silence, so when they explain something, stop, wait a second, they feel compelled to speak some more assuming that people either didn't understand or didn't agree. The answer here to get comfortable with silence and for others to show acknowledgement (visually or verbally). People also seem to be adverse to raising their virtual hand.
- keeping everyone en pointe and communicating out to stakeholders (so they don't interfere)
- Etiquette
- Effectively Communicate
- Some people communicate better (seem friendlier) face to face versus in writing.

Time zones and work hours

- Extended work hrs. (or otherwise no timeboxed work hrs.)
- Working across 3 time zones - US, EMEA and India - means it's hard to coordinate meetings(Note - please do not use my personal details in reference to these comments)
- Managing time differences
- Time displacement
- working too much, too long, quality of life issues
- Remote working flexibility
- Building collaboration across time zones under the new normal and previous issues mention
- supporting multiple timezones spanning the US, India, UK, LatAm

Passive / quiet people

- Encouraging participation from ALL group members in online group conversations.
- People are passive on remote calls
- How can the 'quiet' people be properly heard when they work remotely (and it's thus much easier for them to hide in the background)
- Individuals don't speak up
- similar to 1, helping the less mature developer (who tend to sit on issues) to ask more, and then helping the less mature developer (who ask before thinking at all) - to think a bit first. and to know when these issues are happening.
- Connecting with team members who are quieter to gauge how they are dealing with WFH
- Gauging how well team members are collaborating with each other

Energy, motivation and engagement

- Injecting energy
- Keeping meetings interesting
- Getting everyone to participate fully in retrospective
- Inconsistency of all staff being in the office; being a project co-ordinator in a 'non-traditional' project team (e.g. I'm the only one with a project title, the others are Principal / Senior Advisors; keeping all staff motivated to record their project updates given our 'non-traditional' environment.
- participation
- online engagement
- motivation
- Can be harder to keep the engagement up remotely
- Team members not contributing to agile ceremonies
- Keeping teams engaged and not burned out
- Team engagement
- Less number of team members peovide input during requirement elaboration.
- Employee Motivation
- Not getting 100% participants in sprint review over zoom.
- Staying focused throughout my day - maintaining motivation
- The energy face to face generates
- Effective and fun Retro session Other than that, my Team work really well and still manage to communicate effectively and get tasks done.
- Engagement of participants in meetings
- Incorporating fun
- Motivation after the meeting to follow through on action - most people are struggling
- Engagement
- Running retrospectives remotely - hard to keep people engaged (Note - please do not use my personal details in reference to these comments)
- Maintaining engagement

Hybrid remote/co-located

- Co-ordination/facilitation of ceremonies can be challenging when some are members are remote and some in office.
- Blending of physical and remote working.
- Large meeting with half of the attendees online and half of the attendees in the room can be very challenging, including having to mute / unmute to aviod echo, presenting information on a white board and etc.
- having to cater for mixed medium
- The hybrid model itself. How do I make sure those in the office are including those WFH.
- Some people in the office and some online
- noise levels in open plan offices - lots of people all on the phone at once
- Making remote team members feel as included as in person team members during meetings where there is a mix of both.
- With our organisation moving more towards remote working, and thus moving more to hot-desking, it will be getting much harder for whole teams to co-locate and thus collaborate effectively
- facilitating discussions with mixed participation (with people both in person and online)

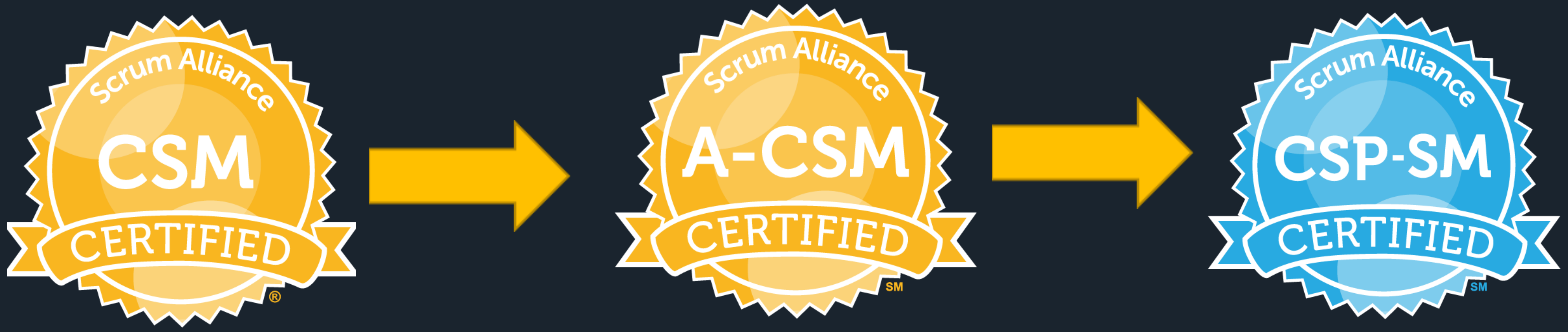
Team development and culture

- team building
- Team building exercises and socialising which would usually happen as a team over a team lunch or pub catch-up.
- team performance
- It can take longer for people to form/perform especially new teams where they only know each other via Digital channels rather than face to face.
- Establishing new teams this way
- How to build team culture
- Team Culture
- team cohesion
- Team culture is fragmented, we don't feel like one team working towards a common goal the way we once did.
- Onboarding new team members
- Group gathering and social chat.
- On boarding and supporting new team members you haven't met in person to feel part of the team.
- Team bonding
- Team health and wellbeing/maintaining team culture/connectivity
- TBH, working remotely has been a very positive thing for our teams..Team bonding is possibly one area that has been missed doing in person, but even here, it can still be done remotely and is still fun and engaging.
- Difficult to coat the team to have an agile mindset

Rapport and relationships

- Personal connection to each other (team culture) and broader organisationally.
- connection
- Building rapport with new teams.
- Building Relationships
- Harder to connect with people
- Feeling connected.
- Building relationships with new starters / helping them build relationships with existing team.
- Culture and loneliness. > You know you're in team, maybe one you consider great but if you're not in physical company of each other and you look around, can you say you're in a team space? Can you turn around and get the same emotional support and empathy from a person hidden behind a screen?
- Social connection
- Maintaining authentic connections
- Missing the in-person interaction with the team members
- lack of face to face interaction
- missing standup personal touch
- Having started a new role during the pandemic, not having met anyone on the team in person means it's harder to build relationships (Note - please do not use my personal details in reference to these comments)

Pathway for Scrum Masters and Agile Coaches


Scrum Alliance
CSM
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A-CSM
CERTIFIED
SM
Scrum Alliance
CSP-SM
CERTIFIED
SM

Advanced Certified ScrumMaster
(A-CSM)
Skills for improving Scrum Teams

Includes:
- Being a Scrum Master
- Facilitation
- Teaching
- Retrospective Facilitation
- Product Backlog Refinement
- Servant Leadership
- Team Dynamics
- Impediment Resolution
- Coaching
- Development Practices
- Scaling

Certification requires:
- Active CSM

12+ months relevant experience

Certified Scrum Professional ScrumMaster
(CSP-SM)
Techniques for improving the Agile Organisation

Includes
- Team Launch
- Lean Thinking
- Advanced Facilitation
- Teaching
- Coaching including Psychological Concepts
- Impact Mapping
- Systems Thinking
- Organisational Design for Scaling
- Organisational Change
- Software Craftsmanship

Certification requires:
- Active A-CSM

24+ months relevant experience