

2011 Philadelphia Day of Agile Session Abstracts

Track 1 – Learning Agile

What is Agile and Why Should I Care

Steve Bohlen

February 2011 marked the 10th anniversary of the Agile Manifesto but after all these years there are still plenty of people that haven't embraced Agile and still have plenty of questions about it. What is Agile and what does it mean for me? How do I "become Agile"? Is it right for myself and my organization?

In this session, we will explore the underpinnings of the Agile software movement, discuss the management and technical practices that can lead to successful Agile projects, and understand how they are all interdependent and co-reinforcing. Attendees will better understand how Iterations, Test-Driven Development, Continuous Integration, and other practices can be used to provide a constant stream of timely and immediate feedback to the project development team, permitting rapid response to change over time.

The ideal attendee will have several years of experience in traditional, non-Agile projects and an interest in better understanding how Agile attempts to address the short-comings and invalid assumptions of tradition software engineering approaches.

The Testing Pyramid

Nancy Chacko

Agile strives to bring testers and developers much closer together than before. But there is often still a divide over who works on what tests; developers are responsible for unit and integration tests, testers look at end-to-end and manual tests. This results in duplicate and inefficient tests. We will explore how to get testers and developers to think about testing in a holistic manner. By working together to create the set of tests and then determining where that testing belongs, we can increase efficiency, reliability and reduce debugging time for failures in the future.

Intro to Kanban

Jonathan Mills

This session will introduce the concepts of lean development. We will explore the origins of Kanban and how to take those principles and apply them to software development.

Selling Agile Into Your Organization

John Petersen

You have heard about agile, perhaps of attended a few sessions and maybe read a few books - and you want to bring Agile to your organization. Perhaps you're not sure how to approach your company or perhaps you have encountered resistance. In this session, John will both present information on and will facilitate a conversation on strategies and approaches to getting Agile adopted in your organization.

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Track 2 – Improving Agile

Agile Teams – From Good To Great

David Bulkin

Is your agile team satisfied with their performance? Is being good enough, or do you want to be great? Is it possible that you can go from good to great by making a number of small changes?

If you want to move towards greatness, attend this session.

- Everyone knows what a standup is, but how many teams execute them with excellence? If you are a Scrum Master do you know how to participate in a standup while allowing the team to be self-managing?
- You have a task board but does looking at a bunch of independent tasks give your team the needed information they need to be excellent?
- Your team knows how to do planning poker, but what are the specifics that make planning poker work better, and what alternatives can you use when you have 100+ stories to create estimates for?
- Your team understands the concept of generalizing specialist and polly skilling, but how can those who aren't expert learn when everyone is so busy delivering?
- You know a bit about risk management but is it possible to apply an agile approach to risk management that can make your team better?

Make Dist. Teams Work (Effectively, Even!)

Jim Holmes

Working with distributed teams can cause extreme frustration, slower velocity for releases, and outright failures of successful completion of your projects – but it doesn't have to be this way! Distributed teams can help you bring great value to your customers, but you'll need a much different approach and mindset to make your teams work effectively. This session will walk you through critical aspects of effective distributed teams including forming your team, tools for effective communication, smoothing your workflow, and dealing with conflict. Along the way you'll pick up practical tips and tricks learned by Jim during years of working with teams spread across the globe. (Psst! Many of these topics covered in this talk work great for co-located teams, too!)

Help! There's a Waterfall in My Sprint

Jim Schiel

At one point or another, many organizations attempting to take on Agile Development and Scrum suffer from a common malady called the "Scrummerfall." Essentially, this is observed when product backlog items (or user stories) are finished at the tail end of the iteration (Sprint) and the testers find themselves in the same place they were in a Waterfall-based project. The result is similar in both methods -- stuff doesn't get done until the end of the project or the iteration and a lot of bad decisions get made while quality is compromised. In this talk, we'll explore why this happens, what it looks like, and how to fix it.

5 Dysfunctions of Agile Teams

Bob Hartman

Is your agile team not reaching their potential? They may be suffering from internal dysfunctions that contribute to less than optimal results. When core dysfunctions are left to fester, the end result may be a late or failed project—and the cause will be chalked up to “that's just the way agile sometimes is.” Based on his coaching work with hundreds of agile teams, Bob Hartman presents an agile team dysfunction model and identifies the five most common dysfunctions—Leave me in my silo, When we communicate it's only by email, Others make commitments for us, Don't blame me because I didn't do it, and Worship the heroes. Bob shows how to determine dysfunctions, communicate them, and, most importantly, help teams get past them. Learn how teams can reach their full potential and even achieve greatness once they fully understand their weaknesses, and embrace practices and efforts necessary to overcome them.

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Track 3– Practical Agile

Agile Product Owners – What Ails Them?

Anupam Kundu

Post the financial meltdown, senior product managers are eager to prove their mettle by building new, innovative products.

Last year I was closely involved in two such consumer-facing software products in start-up mode and observed two different styles of product ownership. One that's enabling, engaging, empowering, encouraging leading to early risk mitigation and collaboration with multiple business partners and the other which is quite the opposite; discouraging, disengaging and tarnished with mediocre choices of practices and technology leading to low team morale and potential delays in product launch.

This year, working with a large financial house and is really saddened at the plight of product owner in this organization.

Risk Adjusted Release Planning

Bob Hartman

Many Agile teams make the mistake of taking the amount of work they've sized for a release, dividing it by their velocity and coming up with a release date. In this session Bob will show a way to do release planning that adjusts for risk, uncertainty and change that inevitably occurs. During this interactive session participants will learn how to use a modified version of the Team Estimation Game in conjunction with Risk Adjusted Planning. This combination results in scope and release date plans that teams can hit versus plans that continuously change and result in dissatisfied customers and stakeholders. If your Agile teams struggle with planning releases then you should attend this session.

Into to Test Driven Development

James Bender

Test Driven Development (TDD) has been one of the biggest and most compelling paradigm changes to software development of the past few years. The ability to bake quality into your application as you develop it can change the way you think about software; it affects the way we approach, design and write applications. Test Driven Development is powerful. Yet many developers allow themselves to be intimidated by what they perceive as added complexity. Managers worry that the practice of "test first" will delay development. This presentation will explain the concepts behind TDD, outline the benefits, give you some concrete examples and some advice on how to sell it to your managers.

Beyond Metrics

Andre Dhondt & Ravindar Gujral

In this hands-on experiential learning session, participants will learn how to tap the power of metrics, then go beyond bean-counting to become highly effective teams. This is a re-run of part of an Agile 2011 talk.

2011 Philadelphia Day of Agile Speaker Bios

James Bender

James has been involved in software development and architecture for 16 years. He has worked as a developer and architect on everything from small, single-user applications to Enterprise-scale, multi-user systems. His specialties are .NET development and architecture, SOA, WCF, WF, cloud computing, and agile development methodologies. He is an experienced mentor and author. James is a Microsoft MVP for Visual C#. James is an active member of the development community. He is the current president of the Central Ohio .NET Developers Group (www.condg.org) and continues to lead the Columbus Architects Group (www.colarc.org) and is the senior editor of first-party content for nplus1.org, an educational website aimed toward architects and aspiring architects. James is also an author for Wrox publishing. His book "Professional Test Driven Development with C#: Developing Real World Applications with TDD" is currently available.

Steve Bohlen

Currently a Senior Software Engineer for SpringSource where he is the Technical Lead and Community Evangelist for [the Spring.NET Framework](http://theSpring.NETFramework), Stephen brings his varied 18-year-plus experience in software and technology to the design and delivery of Software Engineering Solutions and Frameworks for other Software Engineers. In addition to his work on Spring.NET, Stephen is also an active contributor to several other .NET Open-Source Software projects including NHibernate, NDbUnit, and others. Stephen is also a current and past Microsoft MVP award recipient, an ASP Insider, and presently holds the office of the Vice President for INETA, North America.

David Bulkin

David Bulkin is an agile coach, trainer, consultant, writer and speaker with over 25 years experience in delivering high value software systems. For the last decade David has been leveraging agile methods to increase collaboration, shorten time to market, increase quality, reduce risk and increase profitability. David is a Vice President at LitheSpeed, where he helps organizations and teams adopt and grow agile via coaching, consulting and training and he is also an editor at InfoQ.

David writes frequently on agile topics, including unbiased news reporting on agile at InfoQ (<http://www.infoq.com/author/David-Bulkin>) and blogs at LitheSpeed (<http://lithespeed.blogspot.com>).

David is a frequent speaker at agile conferences, including the ScrumGathering, Agile 2010, Agile 2011, National Defense Industry Association, Agile Tour, Agile in Action, Agile Palooza, Quality Assurance Association of Maryland; where he is known for his high energy, practical insights.

Nancy Chacko

I have been working as a tester or manager of testers in an agile environment for over 3 years now, and working in the test field for over 10. I am a firm believer in automated testing and the value of targeted manual testing. At my most recent position, I have helped to lead the transition from what I call "fast waterfall" to a legitimate agile process.

D. Andre Dhondt

D. André Dhondt is an Agile Coach and a community leader of Agile Philly and Technically Philly Groups. He leads agile adoptions, providing guidance and coaching to teams and organizations seeking genuine agile. Practicing agile since 1999, he built an XP team from scratch that reached daily deployments and essentially bug-free code. He holds an M.S. in Information Science from Drexel University. His education continues by reading anything he can on software teams and by seeking community feedback on his ideas through regular speaking engagements. Among other conferences, he has presented at XP 2010+, Agile Tour 2008+, and Agile France. He is the English-speaking liaison for Agile Tour, and has played a role in the Agile Alliance's Gordon Pask Award committee. He lives with his spouse and 3 children in Philadelphia, after 2 years of coaching in Eastern France where the whole family surmounted cultural barriers to become fluent in French.

2011 Philadelphia Day of Agile Speaker Bios

Ravindar Gujral

I am a successful Agile Coach and Project Manager with a strong technical background. I have helped organizations, teams and individual programmers learn high productivity techniques for delivering software. I incorporate the values, principles and practices of agile and lean software development in both my work and the advice I give. I have a proven track record for improving and simplifying processes used for large complex software projects by acting as a change agent and creating high performing teams.

Bob Hartman

Bob brings over 30 years of experience developing software to every client engagement. His logic-based approach to software development and quality was honed early in his career when he obtained both Bachelors and Masters degrees in Computer Science from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Since that time he has broadened his industry knowledge by serving in almost every role in the software industry including developer, tester, documentation writer, trainer, product manager, project manager, business analyst, senior software engineer, development manager and executive. His experience includes 8 years running his own consulting firm and over 15 years of public corporate experience at the Vice President level.

Over the past 12 years he has grown from being an early adopter of agile to his current status as a Certified Scrum Trainer (CST) and Certified Scrum Coach (CSC) who has done significant training, coaching and mentoring in all areas of agile development. He founded Agile For All, to continue to promote the use of agile development methods. He specializes in helping organizations of all sizes achieve successful agile transitions.

Jim Holmes

Long-time proponent of consolidated teams. Mystified at people who think less communication with customers is a good thing. Passionate about minimalism and Lean – because I've suffered through too much gold-plated, overly complex systems with swaths of never-used features. Dedicated to creating environments where teams feel empowered to go out and do great things.

Anupam Kundu

Currently employed as a Lead Consultant with ThoughtWorks North America.

In my current role, my goal is to help clients get the most bang for their buck spend, in developing new and innovative products following Lean/Agile Software Development principles and practices. More often than all, it involves a combination of active hands-on participation in a key role within the team and also enabling multiple globally distributed software delivery teams in active adoption of lean/agile thinking-execution models.

I bring more than 12 years of experience in various stages of software development life-cycle and post-implementation activities as a programmer, business analyst, project/program manager and change management consulting.

I have started contributing back to the agile-lean community as a speaker and author on multiple topics especially that affect the product owners.

Jonathan Mills

I am the Application Development manager at UMB in Kansas City. I am currently moving the team from a full scale waterfall process to becoming more of an agile team. Our group uses Scrum and Kanban processes depending on the project or type of work to be done.

2011 Philadelphia Day of Agile Speaker Bios

John Petersen

20+ year software veteran who has lived it all: waterfall, RAD, Agile, Scrum.. you name it. My company, CEI, is a strong proponent of Agile and Scrum methodologies. Recently, I was part of the yellowbook.com team that was a strong adherent to Agile and Scrum.

Jim Schiel

Jim Schiel has over 28 years of experience in software development, R&D management, Agile Development, and Scrum in highly regulated industries (healthcare, telecommunications). He has been a Certified Scrum Master (CSM) since 2005 and a Certified Scrum Professional (CSP) and Certified Scrum Trainer (CST) since 2006.

Jim's career started in 1985 when he began working for Siemens Medical Solutions. He managed various development teams ranging in size from 5 to 80 developers where he instituted iterative project management processes. At Siemens, Jim transitioned an organization of 1,200 developers from Waterfall and various iterative models to Agile Development using Scrum and Extreme Programming (XP) concepts. Jim left Siemens in 2008 to begin working as an Agile coach and trainer and in 2009, founded Artisan Software Consulting. Artisan provides coaching, training, and consulting to organizations attempting large-scale transitions to Agile Development using Lean Software Development principles, Scrum, XP, and Kanban approaches.

Jim has been training for over 7 years and has trained more than 1,100 students. He currently teaches Certified Scrum Master courses, Certified Scrum Product Owner courses, and provides workshops on advanced Scrum techniques, user stories, agile in management, and more. Jim's book, Enterprise-Scale Agile Software Development, published in 2009 covers much of his experiences managing and guiding large-scale transformations. A second book, due in late 2011, discusses Scrum in more practical detail and answers many of the questions that organizations have while taking on Agile Development.