Battle Wounds from the Agile Frontline

Ken Wiebke

Kristofor Walburn

Lean Agile KC 2015

Conference Information

- Twitter hashtag: #LAKC2015.

- The conference handle: @leanagilekc

Rules of Engagement

- This is your conference – Ask Questions

- Don't make us read a bunch of bullet points

- Speakers reserve the right it ignore questions we can't answer!

- Any specific expectations from us?

Who we are

- Work at VinSolutions and lead the agile efforts

- Transformed several organizations; one being a fortune 500

- Kris has vast experience as a consultant & established agile offshore teams

How to make it happen

Have to have executive buy-in
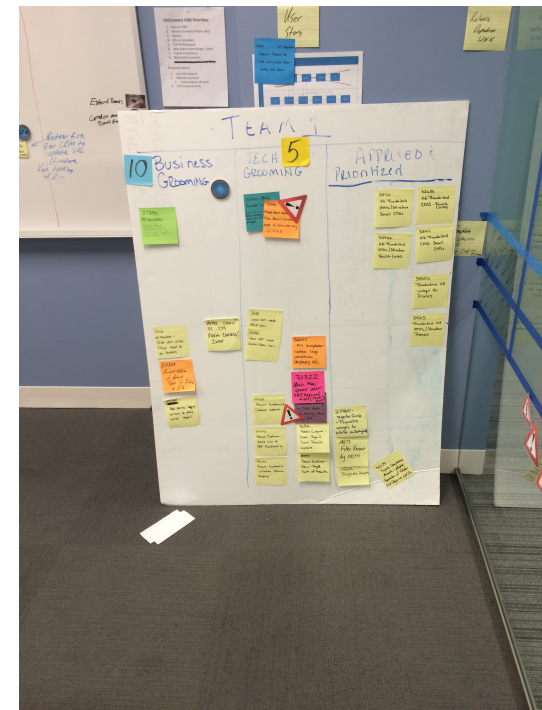
Start small – pilot a few teams

Get funding for training & coaching

Then get more funding!

Don't read all of the blogs about how awesome Spotify and Netflix are

This isn't a tooling problem; post-it notes work

How to make it happen

How to make it happen

Focus on the reason behind the ceremonies.

Why a Daily Standup?

Why do we write stories?

Why do we have Acceptance Criteria?

Who is Benefiting from our Agile Transition?
Why will they Benefit?

Are retrospectives identifying how to get better?

Why it is hard

- Dedicated resources, especially P.O.

- Detractors; you moved my cheese
  - Death by committee
  - Too simple to succeed

- Waterfall is more comfortable
  - Transparency is scary; hiding facts is easier
  - People are comfortable with old metrics

Why it is hard…

- Accounting treats software as an annual expense

- People will leave; your friend might be one of them to go

- Geographically distributed organizations – avoid this initially

Metrics

- Ignore for first 3 months (What else should we look for?)

- Throughput = rate of work getting done

- Velocity = work by iteration (no partial credit)

- Run Rate = labor/unit-of-work

What to look for

- Demo/Sprint Review – Are teams showing what they are finishing (transparency)

- Team Communication – use of we/us vs me/you/them

- Are teams learning in Retrospectives?

- How are impediments being escalated and resolved? – Is management helping remove impediments?

Getting Lean

- Lean is not scrum or kanban

- Visualize your work, then make sure all your work is visible.

- Eliminate waste

- #noestimates – right size your stories

- Power of tracking cycle times / throughput

Work State Cycle Time

els	Approved	In Progress	Ready for QA Deploy	Ready for QA Testing	QA In Progress	Ready for Prod
	2.70	5.12	6.12	1.60	1.20	2.90
	2.00	1.00	1.50	1.00	2.25	11.7
Backlog	2.84	5.90	7.00	1.71	1.00	1.29

...s spending a long time in "In Progress" and "Ready for QA Deploy" states.

...ality: Work was being batched and not delivered until everything was ready.

...rrective Action: work with the team to release work more frequently and minimize ...ge batches.

...ality: Bugs did not get checked into the correct branch and did not go in the ...nned release:

...rrective Action: Educated team on branching strategy for platform. Began sending ...ices of what code was included for each QA deployment.

Getting Lean

- Focus on eliminating waste.

- Is what we do producing Value for our customers?
  - Ceremonies (sprint planning, standup, etc.)
  - Artifacts (stories, backlogs)

Where to go from here?

- Join local Agile Communities

- Find a Coach or consultant that you trust.

- Don't be afraid to experiment.

- The one answer for all of your agile questions:
    - It Depends!!