OUTCOMES OVER OUTPUTS

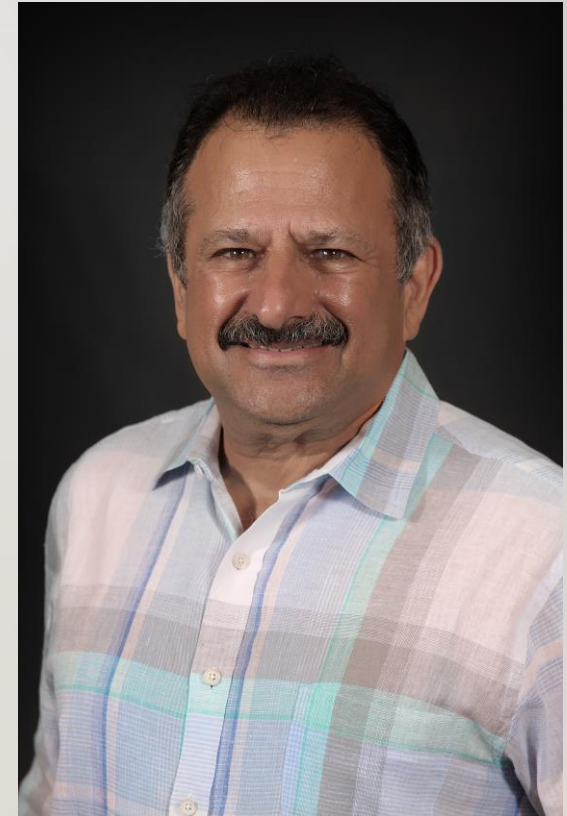BEN RODILITZ AND CHERIE SILAS

CHERIE SILAS, ENTERPRISE AGILE COACH

My Mission: To leave you better than I found you with each encounter

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Outcomes:

- Recognize the difference between outputs (what we produce) and outcomes (the impact we want)

- Identify the desired outcomes and outputs of Scrum events

- Develop effective and measurable outcomes with user stories

OUTPUTS

The amount of something produced by a person, machine, or industry

In Scrum Practice:

The ceremonies we do and what we produce as a result of them.

OUTCOMES

The consequence of doing something

In Scrum Practice:

What we want to happen as a result of what we do.

SIMPLE EXAMPLES

- Making a Meal
  - Output: Food
  - Outcomes: Nutrition, good taste, social setting, experimentation, cultural learning, etc.
- GPS in Mobile Phones
  - E911: Output is Position and Speed outcome is being able to locate someone in an emergency
  - Turn-by-Turn navigation: output Position and Velocity outcome ability to monetize location based services such as turn by turn navigation

SCRUM EXAMPLE – DAILY STANDUP

- Daily Stand Up
  - Refinement of Sprint plan to enhance probability of meeting sprint commitment (outcome)
    - Status – answers to the three questions (output)
    - Gauge how we well we are moving toward meeting our sprint commitment (output)
    - Propose changes to our sprint execution to better meet that commitment (output)
  - Impediments do not hinder the team's progress (outcome)
    - Identification of impediments (output)
    - Action plan(s) to remove impediments (output)
  - More successful sprint/feature execution this sprint and over time (outcome)

ACTIVITY

YOU FIND THE OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

OUTCOMES EXAMPLES: BACKLOG REFINEMENT

- Backlog Refinement
  - The work brought into the sprint is understood to increase probability of success (outcome)
    - Stories meet the team's definition of ready (output)
  - Team is clear on value of the story (outcome)
  - Team is clear on the success/acceptance criteria (outcome)
  - Team has reached consensus on the complexity of the story (relative sizing) (outcome)
  - Understand the problem or opportunity they are trying to solve/take advantage of (outcome)

OUTCOMES EXAMPLES: SPRINT PLANNING

- Sprint Planning
  - Team understanding of the sprint goals (outcome)
  - Team understanding what work they will be doing to meet the sprint goal (outcome)
  - Balance between probability of successfully meeting the sprint commitment and willingness to stretch and improve (outcome)
    - Sprint plan (output)
    - Sprint goal (output)

OUTCOMES EXAMPLES: SPRINT REVIEW/DEMO

- Sprint Reviews/Demos
  - Stakeholder partnership and alignment (outcome)
    - Feedback on the increment produced in the sprint (output)
    - Updated backlog that better reflects the needs and feedback of the stakeholders (output)
  - Understanding the state of the planned release (outcome)
  - Agreement on changes to scope or timeline of the planned release (outcome)
  - Agreement on next priorities (outcome)
    - Backlog prioritization changes (output)

OUTCOMES EXAMPLES: RETRO

- Retros
  - Continuous Improvement (Outcome)
    - (output) Identify issues of concern and an action plan for addressing them
    - (output) Identify team wins to celebrate in order to increase team's state of mind, enthusiasm, etc.
    - (output) Reflection on previous issues to ensure they are being worked/"fixed"

FOCUSING ON OUTCOMES WHEN IMPROVING

- What needs to improve?

- Why does it need to improve?

- What improvement experiments will you try?

- What outcomes do you expect from the experiment?

- How will you know when you have succeeded?

HYPOTHESIS USER STORY FOR IMPROVEMENTS

We believe that <*this experiment*>

Will result in <*this outcome*>

We will know we have succeeded when <*we see this measurable condition*>

HYPOTHESIZE FEATURE SUCCESS

We Believe *that increasing the size of car images on the search page*

Will Result in *improved customer engagement and conversion*

We Will Know We Have Succeeded when:

- *Within 3 months after release*

- *We see a 15% increase in customers who review car images on the search page*

- *We see a 5% increase in customers who convert to purchase within 48 hours of viewing car images on the search page*

HYPOTHESIZE TEAM IMPROVEMENTS

We believe that *decreasing the size of our user stories*

Will result in *our ability to be more predictable in our delivery of work*

We will know we have succeeded when:

- *By the end of this quarter (5 sprints)*

- *The average carry over reduces from our current average of 28%*

- Our average predictability falls between 80-95%

HYPOTHESIZE SCRUM CEREMONY IMPROVEMENTS

We believe that *adopting the walk the wall method in our daily scrum*

Will result in *increased focus and full team ownership of the sprint backlog*

We will know we have succeeded when:

- *Measure results over the next 6 sprints (Q2)*

- *WIP is reduced from our current WIP of one story per developer*

- *Focus on finishing stories rather than starting new stories becomes the norm*

- *We see no more than one started but incomplete feature at the end of the quarter*

WRITE YOUR OWN HYPOTHESIS USER STORY FOR YOUR TAKE-AWAY IMPROVEMENTS

We believe that <*this experiment*>

Will result in <*this outcome*>

We will know we have succeeded when <*we see this measurable condition*>

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