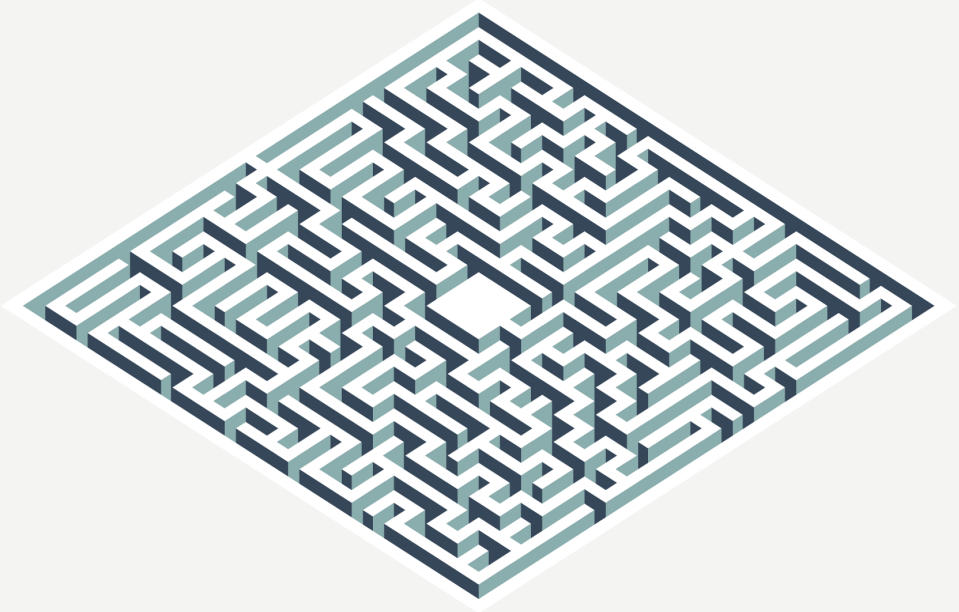MASTER YOUR FACILITATION

AGILE GAMES & SIMULATIONS

FIELD TESTED GAMES FOR
SCRUM MASTERS AND AGILE COACHES

MARC BLESS • DENNIS WAGNER

Agile Games and Simulations

Field-tested games for Scrum Masters and Agile Coaches. Including many activities for remote facilitation.

Marc Bless and Dennis Wagner

This book is for sale at
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This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Forewords

Foreword by Jutta Eckstein

If you ask my private environment, games and Jutta can't really be matched. For example, I am also the one who has a delicious time watching (!) villagers and werewolves at the Retrospective Facilitators' Gathering. And yet, games and/or simulations are often my tool of choice, especially for making complex and complicated relationships clear. And especially in a professional context, I always benefit from an unconventional (is it really?) playful approach, even as a game player.

For this reason, I started early on to use role-playing, especially in the context of training, to create a deeper understanding for the participants. Because as Confucius once said: "Tell me, and I forget. Teach me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I learn." This very quote was also the prelude to the first (pedagogical) pattern I wrote in 2001 - Incremental Role Play - which eventually made it into the Pedagogical Patterns book as Role Play Patterns. As described in that book, Role Play aims to "Most teaching styles respect the audible, a few the visual, and even fewer the kinesthetic. Therefore, invite learners to role play as part of the concept."

I had used this pattern repeatedly to explain Model-View-Controller (a programming paradigm), for example. I also remember when Enterprise Java Beans (EJBs) were the big hit and everyone wondered how the life cycle of such beans actually works, especially when they can be pooled, ready, passivated or even stateless, stateful, entities, persistent or shared? Based on the Role Play Pattern, Nico Josuttis and I had developed an EJB role play in 2001 (see Figure 1), which we used in training courses and

at various conferences, e.g., at OOP in 2003. This role-play helped
to shed light on the bean soup for many.

Figure 2.1. A bean demonstrates its passivity (ACCU 2002). Photo: Nicolai M.
Josuttis (https://josuttis.com/talks/ejb12.jpg)

Especially in the agile community, games have been a means of
choice from the beginning to open up concepts and also to develop
them further. Very fondly, I remember the world's very first agile
conference, the XP 2000 in Cagliari, Sardinia, when on "big stage"
(the first agile conference back then was actually not that big) the
first "Extreme Hour" was presented as a kind of keynote. Peter
Merel, as the inventor, did not miss the opportunity to have a
team of greats like Kent Beck, Ron Jeffries and Alistair Cockburn
compete against a team led by Frank Westphal. The fun and
laughter was great (okay, I was a little biased as a tracker of Frank's
team) when Frank's team finally won the competition (see Figure
2).

Figure 2.2. Kent Beck, struggling to explain why his team lost the Extreme Hour Challenge (XP 2000). Photo: Erik Lundh (https://www.compelcon.se/gallery/XP2000/XP2000_A_013)

I still like to use the Extreme Hour in various variations, both in the execution (e.g. painting, constructing or even building) and in the focus (e.g. on Scrum and/or on agility in general), in order to bring the basic principles of agility closer in a simple, fast and playful way. The topicality is of course also reflected by the fact that this simulation has been included here as Scrum LEGO® City Game. Nothing works better than "laughing away" difficulties through games, so that when they are transferred to everyday life, people also remember the experience in the training context with pleasure.

Dennis and Marc have managed to bring exactly this joy of playing to the point and pack it into this book. In my opinion, this is not at all easy, since games are always something that can be experienced and a book is dependent on purely textual and visual communication. However, the two have succeeded brilliantly in this challenge!

The book is on point, both in terms of pitfalls and through practical examples and tips for implementation. The somewhat colloquial

tone makes the book feel like the two of them are just explaining something to me face-to-face, rather than the book standing between us. Almost amusing are the real-life examples of the two of them chatting out of their secrets. I'm sure every presenter will wince inwardly as they read and think, "Oh yeah, I remember, that happened to me once." That is, what Marc and Dennis had heard or experienced clearly emerged from practice. This includes discussions about the extent to which the games can be transferred to virtual space. For each game presented, there is an explanation of how the corresponding action works online without any loss.

In my opinion, the tips for debriefing the different games are particularly valuable. Especially for people like me, who are not really game enthusiasts, it is exactly the debriefing that makes the added value of a game clear and, because of that, gets me excited about games after all. In short, this book offers a lot of suggestions, whether in an agile context or "simply" for the moderation of workshops, meetings or training sessions. Learning is worthwhile - and playing even more so! Because:

> Learning through play: learning by pretending to learn. The password is 'as if.' That's when the one door that otherwise seems to be locked forever bursts open.
>
> —Elmar Schenkel (*1953), Anglist, author, translator, painter

Jutta Eckstein Author of, among others, Agile Software Development in the Large, Agile Software Development with Distributed Teams and Company-wide Agility (BOSSA nova for short).

Foreword by Björn Jensen

From our earliest childhood days, we begin to explore and investigate the world with all our senses. We literally grasp it. This way

of gaining more understanding of ourselves and our environment becomes more and more "cerebral" the older we get.

I have known Marc and Dennis for several years. Together with both of them I have already designed and conducted workshops, trainings and much more. In all these occasions, we have always focused on experience, on interaction. We go back to where we actually came from.

So playing and comprehending is always about doing something. Agile games and simulations–the title says it all. Because in agile, we assume that knowledge is based on experience. Of course, a certain amount of theory is also part of what may be learned. It is through experience that one creates familiarity. Skillful reflection helps to bring what is experienced into one's own context and thus to find out what is "in it" for oneself. This is called empiricism.

Marc and Dennis have an enormous fund of knowledge about and experience with learning things through play, which can help participants in their own everyday lives. After all, one of the great challenges for anyone who conducts workshops, trainings, etc. is the simultaneous translation of the current topic into the everyday life of the participants. The more theoretical the topic is conveyed, the more challenging this translation performance is. Through the mentioned familiarity, which is created through experience, this translation process can become a lot easier.

What makes this book a special treasure for me that should not be missing on any desk of Agile coaches, facilitators, female and male Scrum Masters and Product Owners or in general everyone's desk, is the fact that the two authors understand well, not to let games be played for the sake of the games themselves. Instead, they impart the knowledge needed to make an appropriate choice of interactions. All that is necessary to carry out the selected interactions and make them a valuable experience is then added. Certainly much more can be written about this when faced with the composition of multiple interactions, but again, Marc and Dennis

foster focus and simplicity. And as our good friend Falk Kühnel likes to say, "Agile doesn't come with a brain! Please use yours ;)" There is enough stuff in this book, and what is needed to connect interactions you can get without a problem if you have some experience. Otherwise, you could also use what has already been strongly propagated in eXtreme Programming: pairing. That is, the joint, goal-oriented creation, composition and execution of formats. It's more fun together anyway. If I had to find something to compare this book to, it would probably be the Retromat for creating retrospectives. This tool has proven itself for years, and at this point I would like to thank Corinna Baldauf and Timmon Fiddike for it. If you are looking for a complementary work, I would like to recommend the book "Scrum-Training" by Kai Simons and Jasmine Simons-Zahno. Marc and Dennis have already joined this ranks with the predecessor "Agile Spiele–kurz & gut", and with the new book they manifest their expertise in this field. Thanks for continuing to share so many good things with us in the community, and thanks for letting me experience many of those things together with you as well.

Björn Jensen

Hamburg, August 14th 2022

Foreword by Chris Philipps

Dear readers,

This should be an eloquent foreword full of esprit. Playful and yet to the point–just like this book! Unfortunately, that didn't work out because I forgot to play with all the serious work and there were always more important and urgent things to do. Now the time is over, and I regret it a little. To hell with seriousness! It's with some longing that I think back to the many games I've facilitated workshops, brought visions to life, and brought teams together.

Many of these games come from the same community that Dennis and Marc belong to. Lovingly collected, tried out at conferences with a lot of fun and passionately applied in everyday life. With the result of making all our lives not only a little more positive, but actually more productive, collaborative or conflict-free.

Therefore, dear ones, read this book. So you don't forget how to play!

Chris Philipps

Acknowledgements

So much has happened in the last years since our two German books on "Agile Games and Simulations" were published.

Our very special thanks still go to Rolf Dräther, who listened to us over lunch at the OOP 2018 conference and made sure with a short comment that we dedicated ourselves to the topic of "Agile Games" in book form at all.

We would also never have been able to write this larger work in the present quality and clarity without our editor Alexandra Follenius. Many thanks also to Michael Barabas, who as publishing director absolutely wanted a large book on this topic. As we would say in Germany: Now he has the salad.

For many years of support, enabling, wisdom and experience in the international agile scene we would like to especially thank Jutta Eckstein. Without her, many sources and references would not have surfaced.

For all the games, simulations, materials, variants and online versions, the in-depth content, personal encounters, constructive conversations, critical feedback and further enjoyment, we would like to thank, as always, in reverse alphabetical order:

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Marc

Marc has once again devoted many nights and weekends to writing this book. Whenever Evelyn, Henry and Theo had already gone to bed and our Max had run the last evening round, I made myself a nasty tea (Lapsang Souchong, for the hard-boiled) and immersed myself in the words. I am very grateful for my family's understanding regarding my work and the insanity of writing books.

The translation of this huge book, the many attempts to find a publisher for the international readers, and the decision to take the whole thing into my own hands on Leanpub–all this has once again deprived me of many nights of sleep. As usual, I did it in such a way that no one noticed. And suddenly a couple hundred pages of manuscript were done.

Dennis

Dennis has this to say: I had the privilege of enjoying mostly restful nights while my friend Marc worked tirelessly, so most of the credit rightfully belongs to him. Marc, you've not only contributed an incredible amount of work but also been the most amazing coworker one could ask for. And the most fun one. I'll always enjoy just chatting with you.

Furthermore, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my family for their unwavering support, helping me navigate the challenges of my job and other pursuits. Your support means the world to me.

My worldview has been profoundly shaped by the incredible community I've had the pleasure of being a part of. This is true for many conferences, bar camps, and meet-ups, but none have left a lasting impact quite like the two events in beautiful Rückersbach near Aschaffenburg. The people at Agile Coach Camp Germany and Play 4 Agile are, without a doubt, my tribe. And yes, there's no Spotify Model nonsense required for that statement.

Before we go on, a big shout-out to the amazing people in Wacken. My family and I've been warmly embraced and integrated into this northern community. It's truly remarkable how open the people in this small viallge on the German west coast is to quirky strangers. By the way, being a local Wacken resident even makes me an official (full metal) villager, although that doesn't seem to really help me in the game "werewolf"!

Very special Thanks

Translating a book is quite a challenging endeavor. For all the support to transform this whole thing into a kind of understandable and meaningful English we would send out a huge "Thank You" to

- Veit Richter
- Jordann Gross
- Glenn Waters
- Ellen Grove
- Eddy Bruin
- Bruce Scharlau
- Björn Jensen
- Andreas Dyck

Without your help we would probably still sit around, thinking of how to proceed, being overwhelmed of more than 100.000 words, and in the end doing nothing. Thanks, and thanks again!

Another important group of people gave us the initial energy to start this whole translation project. Let's just drop some names of supporters, requesters, and recommenders:

- Mike Cohn
- Marjoke Franken
- Dana Pylayeva
- Damon Poole

On Games, Purposes and Moderation

1: Why Agile Games?

"Play so that you may be serious!"

— *Anacharsis, the Scythe (lived around 550 BC), counting to the closest circle around the Seven Sages*

"If you want creative workers, give them enough time to play."

— *John Cleese, member of the Monty Pythons*

At the end of 2019, we published our book "Agile Spiele - kurz & gut" (Agile Games - in a nutshell). It was an unexpected success, and we received a lot of encouragement and confirmation from our readers. Then Corona came around the corner, and the world somehow became very different. The games and simulations in our book were still relevant, but the readership wondered if and how it would all work in the online world. Our clairvoyant abilities at the time of writing the little book were not yet so developed that we would have given the topic of "remote facilitation" even a thought.

So the question arose of what we could do with the pandemic findings. There has been a lot of experimentation in the agile community over the past two years, and the accumulated experience is growing. New online variants of games and simulations have emerged, old opportunities have resurfaced, and the whole "remote" issue has pretty much become normalized for us. So the conclusion was to take the little book, rewrite it, expand it and enrich it with lots of "remote".

We hope you enjoy reading and playing with it.

The Genesis of this Book

It all started with publishing our small book "Agile Spiele - kurz & gut" in 2019. It was a huge success in the German speaking market. It had everything in a nutshell and fits in your pocket. The feedback was amazing. The book contains some 50 games and some basic information on facilitation. There was just one thing missing: any information on remote facilitation. The pandemic went nuts and our awesome book was obsolete.

So we developed a course on agile games and simulations, which is offered online. For many of the games in our old book, there are online variants or remote alternatives that we have (continuously) developed ourselves with the help of the agile community. For many of the games have online variants which are adaptations of the original games, others are entirely new games inspired by the old ones. We have provided in-depth content on *Agile Games Online* on the book's website on a separate subpage. In this way, we gradually (iteratively-incrementally) deliver further benefits to our readership. This way, we regularly receive feedback and are very close to our real customers.

And that's also how–together with the publisher–the idea for this new book came about. There was so much to revise and incorporate. All the things we have learned since the first "kurz & gut". What we already sorely missed back then. And so much that we have learned from the feedback of our readers.

This book was published by end of 2022 in the German-speaking market. In 2023 we decided to start the translation journey on our own with help of the agile community.

You're holding the result in your hands right now. Feel free to tell us what you think, e.g. by e-mail: *marc.bless@agilecoach.de* or *dennis.wagner@dwcg-consulting.de*. We love feedback.

(Feel free to send your thoughts in any kind of format. A simple

appreciation is as good as a detailed, constructive feedback on specific contents of the book. Everything counts!)

What is new?

If you already have "Agile Games–in a nutshell" on your shelf, you will find some content you already know in this book, there is clearly overlap. However, this new book has been significantly expanded and updated, we've added quite a bit of new content:

New games and simulations.

Of course, we have included new games and simulations in each category. Since the first small edition was published, we have come up with many more ideas and encountered previously unknown games. We have selected our Best-Ofs and written them down here.

Technical Skills Games

We are opening up a whole new category with games and simulations on agile "technical skills". The real development work of a team is still the most important aspect of product development. With this new category, we want to help you familiarize your teams with modern agile development practices. For example, the CI with LEGO® game can help teach the continuous integration way of working.

Remote versions and alternatives of the games

"Have you ever played the LEGO® City Game online? And how does the Ball Point Game work remotely?" We get these and similar

questions all the time. The topic of remote facilitation is now an integral aspect of the entire book. Where possible and appropriate, we describe remote facilitation variations directly at each game. Special online alternatives can always be found where an in-person game is not transferable or not transferable well to the virtual world.

Agile games matrix

Many colleagues, Scrum Masters and Agile Coaches keep asking us which games we can recommend for workshops. At this point, the now really flat coach answer belongs, "It depends." And yes, unfortunately, we mean that again. Without knowing the intended learning goal, we can't answer the question in general terms. The Agile Games Matrix has become a suitable tool for us to find games that fit the particular situation in a workshop or convey a certain agile aspect well.

Learning objectives and purposes

In the description of the individual games and simulations, we go into detail about how you can convey certain learning objectives and purposes to the participants. For example, when we claim that a round of Business Value Poker builds confidence, this effect may not always be apparent at first glance. For all our purpose claims, you will now find corresponding explanations in the respective game description.

To say it right away. You might be disappointed, outraged and beside yourself when reading this book. In a very bad way, we have had the audacity to directly copy contents of our first book and reuse them here! Impudence. And quasi self-piracy! (In addition Marc would like to recommend the movie Pirates of Silicon Valley.)

English version

Due to all the feedback we got from the German community and sharing some of our experiences on conferences, an English version was demanded from us. We didn't plan to leave you hanging. Together with the English version, you will also get some new games that didn't made it to the editorial deadline! Lucky you.

May this book be useful for your use of agile games in your workshops or trainings!

However, a few words about the risks and side effects if you really intend to play: The use of agile games and simulations can lead to increased trust and openness in the team. Teams should not take the preparations mentioned in this book in combination with adaptive agility inhibitors. Dysfunctional organizational impediments require multiple applications of specific learning objectives. For appropriate game and simulation therapy treatment of longer-term dysfunctions, contact the Agile Coach you trust.

Target Audience

You train in an agile context, master Scrum teams or coach agile organizations? You are in a leadership role and curious about a new way of experiencing, creating and shaping the world of work? You have another role and may—regularly or not—facilitate workshops, trainings or other events? If so, this book will provide you with plenty of inspiration, ideas and impulses.

We've gathered a wide variety of activities to teach principles or practices that play an important role in agile environments and modern leadership.

The book contains lots of exercises, games and simulations for various learning purposes in an agile context. Since many of you also work with structuring elements for workshops and trainings,

we have gathered appropriate activities for opening, breaking up, grouping and closing. So please don't be surprised if not all activities have an obvious relation to the agile world.

Material and Instructions

In this book, you will find numerous references to downloadable material, instructions, literature, and other pertinent links. We aim to save you the trouble of typing long URLs. Therefore, we've arranged everything in an organized and user-friendly manner, making it easily accessible and clickable on our website:

https://agilegamesandsimulations.com/

On this site, you'll also discover Miro templates, which are digital whiteboard solutions, along with other templates. These resources are tailored especially for the online variants of the games and simulations.

Games in a Business Context

Many wonder, "How do games fit within a business context?" and some even question, "Won't some employees be skeptical about gaming at work?" While the term "games" might raise eyebrows, we also delve into simulations in this book, which immediately sounds more professional.

We value authenticity, and that's evident to those familiar with our approach. However, when dealing with particularly conservative managers, we often emphasize terms like knowledge transfer, simulations, and learning exercises. Tact is essential. Interestingly, we've found that top-level management is often more receptive to the idea of games than those further down the hierarchy. There's a prevailing notion that games might not be well-received by senior

management, even though interactive exercises have been a staple in workshops for years.

Our advice? Approach the topic gently. If the term "game" might not resonate, use a synonym. If there's no resistance, there's no need to create an issue. The organizational culture, leadership style, and team dynamics play a significant role in this acceptance. For instance, in companies where terms like "scrum" and "agile" have met with skepticism, we introduce the principles without labeling them as such. The same goes for games, especially "agile games." Instead, focus on exercises, activities, and simulations. More importantly, prioritize the experience and learning over the terminology.

Throughout this book, when we write about games, simulations, exercises, activities, or something like that, we usually mean something like exercises, games, activities, simulations, or something like that. Or to simplify it, all of them are used interchangeably to refer to interactive learning experiences.

Games as a Facilitation Element

We claim that the games and simulations listed in this book can be used for a specific purpose and that they convey essential agile principles or practices at their core. Then they also have their justification in workshops and trainings. Some of it may seem familiar to you. We didn't reinvent the wheel, and here we've gathered the things that have worked well for us in one place, classified them, described them in detail, and commented on them extensively. But as Oscar Wilde wrote, "Imitation is the highest form of recognition."

If you see the need in your coaching or training to play games designed purely for fun pastime and loosening up, we recommend first going to the local toy store. To make sure you don't get bogged

down by the huge selection, there are a few treasures in this book for just that purpose. You'll find them in the Team-Building section.

It is generally important to us that every game in this book comes from our own practice. So we have already used it all in the field of Agile Coaching in workshops, trainings or simply in our daily (or in the case of Team-Building also nightly) work.

Now, let's get down to brass tacks.

Ralf Kruse lists some essential criteria that are necessary for a good agile game:

Clear Learning Objectives

This is the essential factor for us when choosing an agile game or simulation. We use game elements to achieve very specific and important learning for the participants. We do not play for the sake of playing, but to achieve a learning objective.

Simplicity

We don't want to study an extensive game manual before we can get started. An agile game must be easy to understand, both for you in the facilitation and for the participants. However, you will also find some simulations in this book that do not meet this criterion. A Scrum simulation with LEGO® lasting several days conveys so many individual aspects that the description no longer fits on one page. We are happy to overlook this. After all, there may also be agile games that require experienced moderation.

Playfulness

The participants of an agile game are allowed to have fun and realize that it is a game. We see it the same way with simulations. Without fun, a lot is lost.

Safe to Fail

With agile games and simulations, we create a space where participants are free to experiment and fail without impacting the real world. If we allowed work on the real system in this space, fears of breaking anything would arise. This would

mean that both free experimentation and failure would no longer be possible. But beware! Especially in the area of team-building, you as a facilitator also have a responsibility here. Please make sure that such activities always remain in an area where any harm is avoided. You will learn more about some games later when we discuss stumbling blocks.

Metaphors versus Reality

Can't we do this right now with our ticket system? Why don't we work directly on our real code?" These are questions we like to be asked. Especially when participants are under a lot of work pressure and think they don't really have time for gimmicks, the idea of operating directly on the open heart comes up. People then want the learning experience to be carried out efficiently so that "real" results are produced right away. This is understandable in people's situations. However, it brings to mind the saying, "We don't have time to sharpen the axe because we have to cut down trees first." Working with metaphors in agile games and simulations allows us to reflect on the learning experiences in more diverse ways and transfer them to the real work environment.

Each Session is Unique

Most agile games and simulations are so dynamic that they create a unique experience each time. There are a few exceptions where people who already know the solution they are looking for should not participate again. Then simply put those individuals in the observation role to contribute valuable insights in the debriefing.

Debriefing is Essential

Besides clear learning objectives, debriefing is for us the second essential factor of a good agile game. In debriefing, insights, aha-moments, the deeper understanding as well as the transfer of the game experience into the real working world of the participants emerge.

Most of the games printed in this book meet these criteria, and

exceptions are known to prove the rule. It is your facilitating task to keep these criteria in mind during the execution of a game. Is the game complicated in some way by a special situation or by the participants' own rules? Then go back to the basic rules and restore simplicity. Is someone visibly uncomfortable? Then find out together with everyone else what the problem is and how you can create a *Safe to Fail* state for all participants. Are people constantly discussing their actual situation in their team or organization during a game? Then clarify the metaphors of the game for them and try to get them out of their reality.

Use any "deviations" from these criteria as well as any specifics during the execution to debrief the game. An important tool for us in dealing with such situations are appropriate questions. Here are some examples:

- For what reason did this situation exist?
- What did it do for you?
- What did you experience in this role?
- How do you feel about it?[1]
- What would this mean in your real work environment?

Questions like this will help you transfer to the real world for all participants and get the maximum learning experience out of a game.

Gamification

What does all this have to do with *gamification*? Aren't we rather in the area of *serious games*? Let's have a look at the definition of gamification, which can be found in Wikipedia (*https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamification*):

---

[1]Practically the classic coaching question ...

"Gamification is the strategic attempt to enhance systems, services, organizations, and activities by creating similar experiences to those experienced when playing games in order to motivate and engage users. This is generally accomplished through the application of game-design elements and game principles (dynamics and mechanics) in non-game contexts."

Based on this definition, it is clear that the games and simulations in this book have little to nothing to do with gamification. Gamification takes place in real-world environments and is essentially intended to pay off in terms of the motivation of the people involved. Of course, the learning experiences of our games are meant to be transferred into people's real environments. However, the games do not take place in this real environment. We would also like to help the participants to be more motivated with our games. However, this is a learning effect from the game and not a mechanic that occurs in real work through point accumulation, rankings, and explicit rewards.

In individual aspects, there may be overlap with gamification approaches. On the whole, however, it has nothing to do with it.

The term *serious game* is somewhere between *game* and *simulation*. We could differentiate here pedagogically and scientifically in much more detail, but we don't want to. For our purposes the following rough delimitation is sufficient.

	Real world result	System integration
Game	No	No
Simulation	Yes/No	Yes/No
Gamification	Yes	Yes

The important aspect for us here is that some of the simulations in this book can indeed be used to produce "real" results. Some

can even be incorporated as a tool into the existing "system" of the organization. Examples are Business Value Poker, City Builders and Fearless Journey.

2: Categories and Purposes

> "Playing is an activity that you can't take seriously enough."
>
> — *Jacques-Yves Cousteau (1910–1997), marine explorer.*

To help you navigate through this book, we have come up with a categorization of all the games and simulations. You will find these categories in the chapter structure of the book, so you can get a quick overview. Another important tool is the description of the purposes of the games and simulations. With the matrix of learning goals and purposes you will quickly find all the possible activities to achieve them.

Types of Games

We divide the games and simulations in this book into different categories. The first block (found in Part II onwards) contains categories that we use in general for workshops of any kind:

Group building
Small activities or mini-games that can be used to form groups for other games and also more generally in workshops and meetings (e.g. in retrospectives).

Opener
Games that can be used to open a workshop or training.

Energizer
Games that bring the energy level of the participants back up. Well suited after long, tiring phases or after the lunch break.

Closing

> Closing activities for the end of a workshop.

You can now rightly remark that the games in these four categories do not deserve the label "agile" at all. But that doesn't matter at all, because they work just as well in an agile context as in a classic one. We see it quite pragmatically under the somewhat modified motto: "He who plays is right."

The core of this book, found in Part III, describes games and simulations divided into the following categories:

Teaching Principles

> Games that illustrate certain agile principles and make them tangible

Simulations

> Games that bring agile practices to life.

Social Dynamics and Communication

> Games that illustrate aspects such as trust and communication in a social team context.

Technical Skills

> Games that bring agile development practices to life

Team-Building

> Games that can be used to conclude a training day or simply for team fun.

Like any categorization, this is a questionable pigeonholing. The transitions are fluid, and there is overlap. Many simulations also teach principles, provide communicative experiences, and serve team-building purposes. Don't let this throw you off; much more important than these broad categories is always the question of what purposes and learning goals you want to achieve for participants with a game.

Purposes of the Games

Batch Size (Reduction)
> Batch Size and Batch Size Reduction are fundamental concepts in flow management systems such as Kanban. All team members need to understand these concepts in order to reflect and improve their workflow.

> Coin Flip Game, Kanban Pizza Game, Paper Plane Factory

Business Value
> Teams must achieve maximum business value through their work. Only when they understand this concept can they constructively challenge their goals and backlogs.

> Coin Flip Game, Business Value Poker, Snowflakes, City Builders - Prioritizing Epics

Closing
> A longer training also includes a closing that anchors the findings in the long term.

> Letter to Myself, Study Buddy, Homework, Journaling

Communication
> When people don't talk to each other constructively (anymore), it helps those involved to understand communication better.

> How to draw a Toast, Rhetoric – The Public Speaking Game, Chinese Whispers, Spaceteam (App), Shower of Appreciation, SIN Obelisk, Team 3 and ToiletTrolls, Side Switcher, Coop Maze, Coding Dojo, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), Among Us, Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes, Spyfall, Secret Hitler

Complex Systems
> Making the wondrous relationships of cause and effect understandable.

> Magic Triangle, Australian Floating Wood, Blind Counting

Continuous Integration

The continuous integration of small components into a larger software product is an integral part of modern, agile software development practices. All teams must be aware of and apply this concept.

Continuous Integration with LEGO®

Cost-of-Delay (CoD)

For prioritizing features or projects in a portfolio, the concept of cost-of-delay is an important tool for product owners and product managers.

City Builders - Prioritizing Epics

Cross-Functional Teams

In many areas, cross-functional teams have advantages over teams with singular expertise. In larger organizations, introducing this concept takes some convincing. People at all levels, from operational team members to key management, need to understand and support the concept.

Marshmallow Challenge, Scrum LEGO® City Game, Kanban Pizza Game, The House of Santa Claus, Paper Plane Factory, ScrumTale, Coop Maze, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), Testing Jenga, The T-Shaped House

Empirical Process Control

Empiricism is one of the agile pillars and must therefore be understood by all stakeholders.

Marshmallow Challenge, Scrum LEGO® City Game, Kanban Pizza Game, Ball Point Game, The House of Santa Claus, Online Point Game, ScrumTale

Energizer

Air out during a training day? Then whip out an energizer.

Black Stories, Two Truths and a Lie, Dobble, Anagram, Happy Salmon, Inverse Musical Chairs, Rock-Paper-Scissors, The Plank, Rain Maker, Snowball Fight, Pomodoro Break, Scavenger Hunt, Walk'n'Talk, Learn to Juggle, Push vs. Pull in a Minute, Yes, exactly!, Australian Floating Wood

Fun Without fun no serious! So seriously now, without fun!

Black Stories, Two Truths and a Lie, Happy Salmon, Inverse Musical Chairs, Rock-Paper-Scissors, Snowball Fight, Yes, exactly!, Spaceteam (App), Among Us, Werewolves, Power-Point Karaoke, Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes, Cards against Agility, Spyfall, Secret Hitler

Getting to know the group

Always useful, if not necessary, in longer trainings and in teams.

Sorting and Counting, Experience Corners, Get to Know You - Bingo, Something True and Positive, Virtual Social Network, Two Truths and a Lie, Profile for the Team, Hometowns

Grouping

Use this to quickly divide your participants into smaller groups.

Sorting and Counting, Same Objects, Experience Corners

Idea Generation

Creative insights in the team you can promote with this.

Yes, exactly!, Fearless Journey, Story Telling in Circles

Identify and Overcome Impediments

Your team makes existing impediments visible and finds solutions for them.

Magic Triangle, Exercise Without A Name – E.W.A.N. Mc-Gregor, Fearless Journey, Coop Maze

Initiating Action

Theoretical knowledge is not enough. Participants must move directly into action at the end of a training session.

Letter to Myself, Study Buddy, Homework, Journaling

Iterative and Incremental Development

This fundamental concept of all agile methods must be understood by all stakeholders.

Marshmallow Challenge, Scrum LEGO® City Game, Ball Point Game, The House of Santa Claus, Online Point Game,

ScrumTale

Kanban

For getting to know Kanban.

Kanban Pizza Game

Lean Principles

The lean principles are part of the fundamental basic knowledge for all participants: "Identify Value", "Map Value Stream", "Create Flow", "Introduce Pull" and "Continuous Improvement".

Coin Flip Game, Boss-Worker Game, Business Value Poker, Resource Utilization Trap, Kanban Pizza Game, Paper Plane Factory

Multitasking

The all-too-human occurrence of harmful multitasking must be understood by all stakeholders in order to effectively counter it.

Push vs. Pull in a Minute, Counting Numbers and Letters, Multitasking Name Game, Resource Utilization Trap, Spaceteam (App)

Opener

Optional-mandatory for longer trainings and workshops.

Experience Corners, Get to Know You - Bingo, Something True and Positive, Brilliant Moments, Virtual Social Network, Black Stories, Two Truths and a Lie, Profile for the Team, How much am I here right now, Dobble, Hometowns, Anagram, Yes, exactly!, Australian Floating Wood

Positive mood

To put the participants in a creative, open state, a positive basic mood helps.

Something True and Positive, Brilliant Moments, Happy Salmon, Inverse Musical Chairs, Rock-Paper-Scissors, Rain Maker, Snowball Fight, Yes, exactly!

Presenting

Strengthening rhetorical and spontaneous skills in the team.

How to draw a Toast, Rhetoric – The Public Speaking Game, PowerPoint Karaoke

Prioritization

Sort backlogs well to maximize benefits. See also "Business Value".

Business Value Poker, City Builders - Prioritizing Epics

Product Discovery

Developing ideas in a team to find new features for the product.

Snowflakes, SIN Obelisk

Product Vision

Gain insights into the importance of a good product vision.

Scrum LEGO® City Game, Summer Meadows, Snowflakes, ScrumTale

Push-versus-Pull Principle

Pull systems are among the fundamental concepts of agility and must be understood by all stakeholders.

Boss-Worker Game, Push vs. Pull in a Minute, Resource Utilization Trap, Scrum LEGO® City Game, Kanban Pizza Game, Paper Plane Factory, ScrumTale

Refactoring (Continuous)

Continuous refactoring is a central part of modern agile development practices and must be understood and applied by all teams.

Coding Dojo, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), Technical Debt Game

Reflection

Identifying and revealing deep-seated obstacles.

Snowball Fight, Letter to Myself, Homework, Journaling, Scrum LEGO® City Game, Kanban Pizza Game, Ball Point Game, The House of Santa Claus, ScrumTale, Exercise Without A Name – E.W.A.N. McGregor, Fearless Journey

Requirements

Learn the difference between good and not so good requirements formulations.

Summer Meadows, How to draw a Toast, Snowflakes, Chinese Whispers, SIN Obelisk

Scrum

Get to know the Scrum framework hands-on.

Scrum LEGO® City Game, Ball Point Game, The House of Santa Claus, Online Point Game, ScrumTale

Self-Organization

Self-organization is expected of all agile teams and must be understood by all participants.

Boss-Worker Game, Marshmallow Challenge, Magic Triangle, Scrum LEGO® City Game, Kanban Pizza Game, Ball Point Game, The House of Santa Claus, Online Point Game, ScrumTale, Australian Floating Wood, Blind Counting, Human Knot, Spaceteam (App), SIN Obelisk, Coop Maze, The T-Shaped House

Servant Leadership

All participants with leadership responsibility are given a sense of how classic and agile leadership differ.

Boss-Worker Game, Scrum LEGO® City Game, ScrumTale

Stimulating Creativity

For most workshops, it is necessary to put the team in a creative mode.

Something True and Positive, Brilliant Moments, Black Stories, Two Truths and a Lie, Yes, exactly!, Story Telling in Circles

Team-Building

Let the team grow together through shared experiences and increase trust within the team.

Get to Know You - Bingo, Something True and Positive, Virtual Social Network, Profile for the Team, Marshmallow Challenge, Business Value Poker, Scrum LEGO® City

Game, Kanban Pizza Game, ScrumTale, Australian Floating Wood, Blind Counting, Rhetoric – The Public Speaking Game, Coding Dojo, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), Among Us, Werewolves, Spyfall, Secret Hitler

Teamwork

Achieving success together as a team.

Pomodoro Break, Scrum LEGO® City Game, Kanban Pizza Game, ScrumTale, Australian Floating Wood, Spaceteam (App), SIN Obelisk, Team 3 and ToiletTrolls, Coop Maze, Coding Dojo, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), The T-Shaped House, Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes

Technical Debt

In order to develop a system over the long term, each team must understand the concept of technical debt and be able to avoid it.

Coding Dojo, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), Testing Jenga, Dice of Debt, Technical Debt Game

Technical Excellence

An agile team has a commitment to develop products at the highest level with modern agile development practices.

Coding Dojo, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), Testing Jenga

Trust Building

A team only works really well with trust.

Something True and Positive, Brilliant Moments, Two Truths and a Lie, Profile for the Team, Walk'n'Talk, Study Buddy, Business Value Poker, Yes, exactly!, Australian Floating Wood, Blind Counting, Rhetoric – The Public Speaking Game, Shower of Appreciation, Team 3 and ToiletTrolls, Side Switcher, Coding Dojo, Ensemble Programming (Mob Programming), Among Us, Werewolves, Spyfall, Secret Hitler

Utilization

The utilization of a system always has a natural maximum

that must not be exceeded. This fact must be understood and respected by teams and especially by leaders.

Resource Utilization Trap, Kanban Pizza Game

Work-in-Progress Limit

Establish understanding of bad multitasking. An essential principle that must be understood by all stakeholders.

Coin Flip Game, Counting Numbers and Letters, Multitasking Name Game, Resource Utilization Trap, Kanban Pizza Game, Paper Plane Factory

Workflow Visualization

Understanding your own workflow within the team allows you to identify bottlenecks and improvements.

Kanban Pizza Game, How to draw a Toast

The Agile Games Matrix

We are friends of visualization. So it stands to reason that this extensive list detailing the purposes of the games should be presented graphically. However, a printed book is the worst possible format for such an extensive visualization.

For this reason we refer to the website of the book. At

https://agilegamesandsimulations.com/agile-games-matrix/

you will find a large table with all games in the rows and all purposes in the columns. Figure 2.1 shows the matrix.
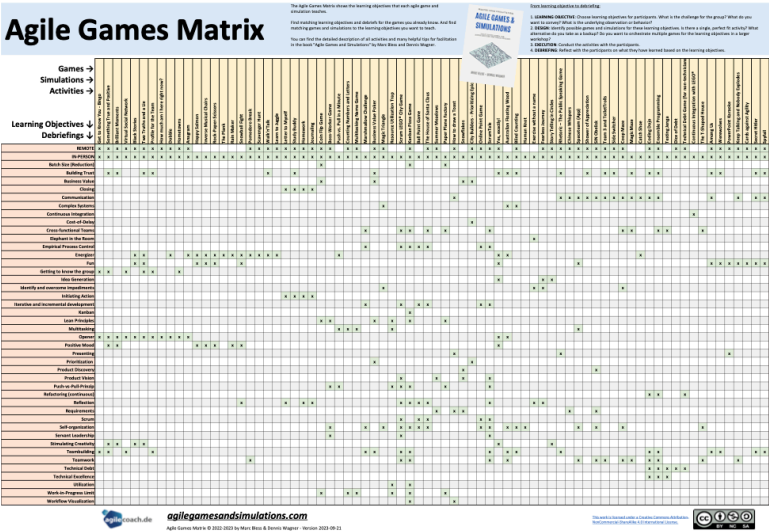
Figure 5.1. The Agile Games Matrix

The idea behind this Agile Games Matrix is first that you have a quick way to find the right game for certain purposes, second that you find more purposes for a game you know that you can teach, and third that you extend this matrix for yourself with your own games and more purposes.

Remote and In-Person Games

Most of the games in this book work both in-person in the real world and online in the virtual environment. For the games that only work on-site with real social contact, we mention possible alternatives that you can use online.

Apart from that, the Agile Games Matrix will help you. If you have chosen an in-person game for a specific purpose, you will certainly find an online alternative for it in the matrix.

Representation of a Game

We describe the individual games in this book according to the following scheme:

Title

    Name of the game.

Type

    General purpose of the game. What is this game for, and what does it convey? (We give this attribute only if it does not follow directly from the name or category of the game).

Purposes

    For what purposes is the game suitable? What aspects can be conveyed by the game?

Medium

    Can the game be used remote (online) and/or in-person?

Level

    How much experience do you need for moderation? Basic recommendation for this: Nobody was born perfect! (Philosophical interjection: Or everyone was born perfect and hasn't discovered some aspects of it yet). Try things, even if you've never done them before and feel unsure. Confidence comes from repeated use. Dare and learn from your experiences. This is the principle of empirical process control, so to speak, applied to your facilitation. You do not need to specify any previous experience or requirements for the participants. All games in this book can be performed without any previous experience of the participants.

Group Size

    Examples: 4 to 14, maximum 30, not limited, even number, etc.

Duration

    How long is the game planned to last or based on experience?

Learning Objectives

What can the participants learn? What knowledge do you want the players to gain?

Materials Needed

What utensils need to be ready, possibly including a link to purchase, download, etc.

Preparation

What conditions must be created in order to be able to moderate the game?

Procedure and Facilitation

How exactly does the game work, which steps are carried out, how is the game moderated?

Follow-up

What needs to be cleaned up or done after the game?

Notes and Hints

What do you have to pay attention to regarding moderation, materials, participants, etc.?

Pitfalls

What things can go wrong, how can they be avoided?

Debriefing Tips

Which key messages in the debriefing support the Learning Objectives?

Purposes in Detail

How are the purposes of the game specifically implemented and achieved?

Source

Where did the game come from, where and when did we learn about it? What is the literature and references?

You can find all links, sources and references contained in the book as well as further material for downloading additionally on our page about the book at *https://agilegamesandsimulations.com/*.

3: Facilitation Explained

"Playing a game is most effective when participants are so engrossed they forget it's a structured activity."

— Arthur Feldmann (1926–2012), Austrian-Jewish writer.

"Navigating social relationships in the digital age can be both baffling and challenging."

— Inspired by Dr. Sheldon Cooper, Big Bang Theory.

As a Scrum Master, Agile Coach, Facilitator, or Team Facilitator, you're often tasked with conducting workshops and training sessions for larger groups. To excel in this role, you need a well-equipped toolkit. This chapter introduces you to the "Training from the Back of the Room" approach, offering a structured method to design your workshops and training sessions.

Before diving into the specifics, let's understand the importance of pacing. Knowing when to introduce an energizer can make a significant difference in participant engagement. We'll guide you on how to identify those moments and select the most fitting game for the situation.

We recognize the evolving nature of facilitation, especially with the increasing shift to digital platforms. Hence, we'll delve into tool-boxes tailored for both remote and in-person facilitation, ensuring you're prepared for any scenario.

However, even with the best tools and intentions, challenges can arise. We'll discuss potential pitfalls in facilitation and provide strategies to navigate them effectively. And because continuous improvement is at the heart of Agile, we'll also touch upon methods

to gather feedback from your participants, aiding your growth as a facilitator.

Returning to Feldmann's insight, the essence of an agile game is its learning objective. While the game serves as a vehicle, the primary focus remains on the learning outcome. The most impactful games are those where participants are so immersed that they forget they're in a structured activity.

On the topic of virtual interactions, the sentiment echoed by our humorous reference to Sheldon highlights a genuine challenge many face: maintaining authentic human connections in remote formats. This chapter aims to address this, exploring ways to foster genuine interactions even when miles apart.

Workshop Design from the Back of the Room

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Training from the Back of the Room (TBR)

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Practical tip: TBR templates

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Examples of activities

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Connections

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Concepts and Concrete Practice

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Conclusions

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Game Selection Based on Environment

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Short Meeting, Reporting, Daily

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

In daily teamwork.

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Workshops and trainings

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

Rather no game

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

When people really don't want to play.

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

When there's something critical going on

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

If the company culture doesn't allow it.

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

When the previous facilitator overdid it with games.

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

If you have to explain a very specific topic

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

If you have no idea

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

When do Energizers fit into the Workshop Flow

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at http://leanpub.com/agile-games-and-simulations

The Game Facilitation Kit

Which items should you always have in your bag? And what do you only pack if you really want to use it concretely, because it is better to play well planned? These questions are not so easy to answer. It depends a lot on your role and what your typical workday looks like.

For example, if you work very closely with a team as a scrum master or leader, you usually (or hopefully) have a team area available to store all the materials and games needed for the appropriate facilitation. So you can quickly grab anything on an ad hoc basis when the need arises.

If, for example, you are an Agile Coach or trainer on the road a lot and meet new teams and organizations every day, it is practically impossible to be prepared for all eventualities. Therefore, think in advance about the games you will be facing and pack your suitcase accordingly.

The same goes for visits to agile conferences and unconferences. Look in your kit and decide what you want to take with you, perhaps to run a session or two on a game you don't know well yourself yet. At Agile coach camps and events like Play4Agile, you'll have both the right opportunity and the right audience to do this. Take with you what interests you and what you would like to pass on to others.

What we generally consider useful in a small agile game kit:

General materials

- sticky notes (small, medium, large)
- various markers in different colors
- crayons in various colors
- a pack of tissues
- a pack of printer paper
- stopwatch, timer (we like to use the product *TimeTimer*, which you can find under this name in specialized shops)
- loudspeakers for music playback
- Laptop for presentations via projector
- adhesive tape
- parcel string
- five to ten scissors
- Tape measure or folding rule
- Adhesive labels for name tags

Materials for specific games

- 30 *Get-to-know-you bingo* sheets
- one or more sets of *Black Stories*
- one game of *Dobble*
- two to three games of *Happy Salmon*
- a box of juggling balls
- a bag of juggling cloths
- 50 coins of the same values
- 50 coins with different values
- a pack of marshmallows
- a pack of spaghetti
- play money for *Business Value Poker*

- a bag of ping pong balls
- a large bag of LEGO® bricks
- ten *Kanban Pizza Game* oven printouts
- ten *Kanban Pizza Game* order card printouts
- 20 to 30 softballs
- five *Summer Meadows* printouts, each for vision and detail requirements
- play money for *Snowflakes*
- *City Builders* epics printouts
- one game of *ScrumTale*
- several folding sticks
- five *Fearless Journey* printouts
- *Rhetoric*, the game or app
- *SIN Obelisk* printouts
- one or more *Team 3* games
- five *Coop Maze* printouts
- one Jenga game
- several dozen dice
- two or more card games of *The Mind*
- *Werewolves* as a game, plus expansion sets if applicable
- box
- five bomb instructions printouts for *Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes*
- *Cards Against Agility* printouts
- one game of *Spyfall*
- all the books mentioned for the book table.

You see, the contents will soon need a shipping container if you actually wanted to take everything. Long story short, think about what you use frequently and put together your own personal gaming suitcase.

We would like to give you one more urgent recommendation: Never save on materials!

Cheap sticky notes cost you nerves if they don't stick properly and keep falling off. This can range from embarrassing to unprofessional–and it definitely disrupts the flow of your moderation and that of the game. This is not paid surreptitious advertising, but our belief: Sticky notes from the most popular and widespread brand that have the words "Super Sticky" always work.

It's the same with pens. Stock up on good markers. We prefer Neuland and Sharpie, they are wonderful to write and draw with. And the best thing about them is that they don't squeak when you write. Feel free to find out for yourself which tip shape suits you best.

The long-suffering workshop moderator–stories from the road

In our jobs, it's happened to both of us more than once that, despite careful planning, things weren't there or didn't work out. Even if you've booked (and paid extra for) flipcharts and pens at the conference hotel, that doesn't mean you can do anything with them. The flipcharts may already be written all over, the pens may have dried up due to a lack of a cap, and there may be no one at the event office. Don't you think? We could tell stories here …

What really helps you here is the facilitation case de luxe. We have something like that, too. You will find in it:

- enough Sticky Notes (in different sizes and colors) for a workshop with 200 participants
- many pens (in our case about 50 black Neulands plus a few colored ones)
- two wireless microphones to plug in (one for the moderation, one for questions from the audience)
- a large Bluetooth speaker (with emphasis on large–think ballroom)

- a Bluetooth conference phone
- a small projector
- a document camera (turns the projector into an overhead projector), Figure 3.1
- a roll of flipchart paper
- a roll of Magic Chart flipchart film (in case the flipchart stands are missing)
- a (charged!) Bluetooth-Presenter
- spare batteries

Sounds funny? We've been able to/had to use all of that. If you ask us, the old saying from the computer movie *Under Siege 2: Dark Territory* (okay, okay, it's a Louis Pasteur quote) holds true: "Chance favors the prepared mind."

Figure 6.1. Document camera in action.

Source of Figure 3.1 is [IPEVO].

The Toolkit for Remote Facilitation

It is not at all easy to name specific online tools that will still exist a year after this book is published. At the beginning of this millennium, we probably would have pointed to ICQ and Second Life as wonderful and innovative online tools. A short time later, no one was crowing about them anymore. Innovations disappear from people's consciousness just as quickly as they appeared. Last year (2021) we might have referred to hypes like Clubhouse. And if you still don't publish your content on TikTok in 2022, you'll just have to take a look next year to see what's currently trending. No one can say with certainty whether all these tools will still be used in the future. So in this section, we don't recommend any specific tools, but rather tool classes that have proven themselves for agile games and simulations. In doing so, we primarily describe what matters in the individual tool classes and which features are important and valuable to us.

Necessary equipment

Virtual whiteboard

- Make sure that participants can easily access the board. It should be as intuitive as possible to use.
- You must be able to easily save the created content as a PDF and/or export it to other formats. This is essential for follow-up of trainings and workshops.
- Selection of possible tools: Miro, Mural, Conceptboard, Jamboard. Even with groupware tools such as PowerPoint in Microsoft 365 or Google Docs, useful results can be achieved in companies with restrictive IT security.

Video conferencing

- The focus of video conferencing is on the participants. Make sure there is an open communication culture. Cameras should always be on to allow for maximum range of communication, including body language.
- A necessary feature for all workshops and many games is to create breakout rooms. Breakout rooms give you an easy way to have smaller groups communicate and collaborate in their own channels in the online meeting. Where in the real world groups simply assemble in the room, online we use breakout rooms. Ideally, participants can switch back and forth between breakout rooms themselves. We want to use this to model the freedom we have in the real world with our feet as well.
- Selection of possible tools: Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Big-BlueButton, Cisco WebEx, Google Meet (formerly Hangouts), Circuit, Skype, Polycom, Facetime and many more.
- Another little tip: If the only available tool doesn't offer breakout rooms at all, you can help yourself by running several online sessions in parallel and collecting the links to them on an online whiteboard, for example. And if you have the misfortune to work for a large corporation with restricted rights, you may sometimes have to do it that way even after years of pandemic.

Online Polls

- Some of the virtual whiteboards mentioned above already bring the ability to run polls.
- If you're not currently using a whiteboard for a session and are more likely to be presenting information, you can bring in interactive elements with online polls.
- Selection of possible tools: Mentimeter, AhaSlides, VOXR, Participoll, Slido, Poll Everywhere.

Professional Technology

- First and foremost, you need a high-quality audio setup. This includes a good microphone, possibly headphones or a headset. All of this should be of at least upper mid-range quality. You need to be clearly audible to your participants. Make sure you use wired systems. It has happened too many times that the battery of a wireless headset died in the middle of a workshop and the big search for the spare headset started, "which should be here somewhere in the cupboard".
- In workshops and trainings, you often have to access the whiteboard for the participants and copy elements from your master board at the same time. Add to that windows for video chat, your workshop agenda, and maybe another text chat for participants. In other words, you need a lot of screen space to keep all these things in view quickly. We definitely recommend a secondary screen with at least 4K. Of course, you can also do all this on a small notebook screen. But nobody wants that!
- A good webcam with at least HD resolution helps so that your participants can also admire your beauty in all its glory. Here, however, we are actually of the opinion that content and your competence are far more important than a perfect picture. An ordinary built-in laptop camera will do, but if you want to make it more professional, get a good camera. A decent alternative may be lying in your closet somewhere: older digital cameras are hardly used today due to the high quality of smartphone cameras and like to rot in the drawer. However, they are almost ideal to use as a professional online camera when equipped with a table tripod.

Nice-to-have

A green screen behind you is very useful for professional video backgrounds, but it's not absolutely necessary to get one. A little tip on the side: It doesn't have to be the equipment of a professional photographer. A telescopic pole, a few clamps from the hardware store and four running meters of green fabric may get you very far.

If you got into the habit of visualizing a lot with pens on flipcharts in the good old days, a document camera might be just the thing for you (see on Figure 3.1). With a document camera, you can just draw on it and show the image to your participants in real time. Whether you draw with markers on sticky notes or with a pencil in a notebook is entirely up to you. That's the beauty of a document camera: you work with the material you want to use, while simply filming what you do for the participants.

In some games and activities, participants work together on a document. To do this, you'll need access to groupware like Google Workspace or Microsoft 365, which allow your participants to work on a document and create content simultaneously and for everyone to see.

The inquisitive and the avid readers among your people will always be happy if you can provide them with PDFs or links to important books, articles, blogs etc. Online, you can use it to build a virtual book table.

Material for specific games

For some games and simulations in this book you can use reusable templates. This way you'll be able to set up a game session in no time. Figure 3.1 shows some of the templates we like to use over and over again.
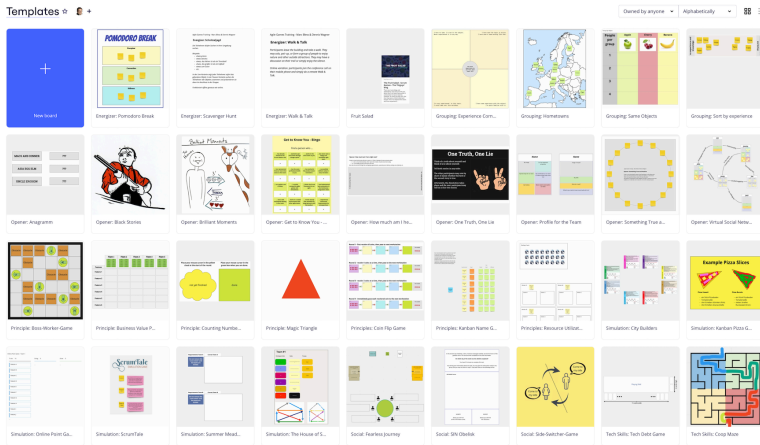
Figure 6.2. Miro templates for games and simulations.

On the book's web page (*https://agilegamesandsimulations.com/*), you'll find many templates for Miro, our favorite online whiteboard. If you use another virtual whiteboard and are looking for templates for it, you are sure to find them in the agile community. Or you can create your own templates and feel free to share them with the agile community.

In-person material for remote sessions

Use existing material from the real in-person world for your online sessions. Card games are ideally suited for this. For example, take a closer look at the games ELMO[1], the Sherlock Holmes-inspired collection "The Challenge Trilogy"[2], Dobble or Black Stories.

---

[1]ELMO stands for "Enough, let's move on," and the cards can be found in Lisette Sutherland's store, for example, at *https://www.collaborationsuperpowers.com/shop/* [SUTHERLAND].

[2]Available at *https://professorpuzzle.com/products/puzzles/sherlock-holmes/the-challenge-trilogy/*

Tools without end

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, new tools keep appearing, some things disappear, and there are a few evergreens that are still in use.

Check out Lisette Sutherland's collaboration superpowers page [SUTHERLAND] for a seemingly endless list of tools for remote work. Take a look there and find inspiration and alternatives to existing tools.

Preparation vs Spontaneity

An agile game should always be conscientiously prepared! Especially for longer games, you want to offer the participants a pleasant, professional experience. All the necessary materials are ready, you know the sequence of events and, if necessary, have moderation cards to guide you through the moderation. And there's no difference at all between in-person and remote games. In both worlds, you want to have everything at hand at all times to carry out the planned activity.

It looks very unprofessional if, in the middle of the moderation, you have to ask, "Does anyone know where we can get five pairs of scissors right now?" Or, "Now we would need another table so we can continue." Also nice: "Hold on, I'll open up a Google Doc for us real quick." And a few minutes later: "I don't know why you can't access it either, it should actually work." Situations like this not only cost you unnecessary time, but also annoy your waiting group to no end.

In short, you make sure that everything is thought of so that the game can run easily without interruptions.

Of course, we know full well that a workshop agenda that has been prepared for weeks and thought through in every detail

usually doesn't survive five minutes. After all, they have that in common with project plans, and that's why we've been dealing with lightweight methods since the end of the last millennium. Even with workshops we have to deal with "Dynamic Systems" [STAPLETON], in a workshop agenda with "Adaptive Software Development" [HIGHSMITH], and on our workshop participants we need a "Crystal Clear" view [COCKBURN]. (Gee, what an exaggerated set of claims, I guess at least a handful more references to Agile manifesto authors could have fit in there. Oh well. Another time.)

So if our workshop agenda fails like any other project, at least we know that we can be prepared to be surprised. Something can always go differently than originally planned. This already starts with the human trivialities. Participants are stuck in traffic and arrive late, someone suddenly falls ill and stays away. A participant has to pick up his child unexpectedly and is absent for the rest of the workshop. It is just as likely that your participants have other worries. The prepared workshop topic had to give way to an acute problem that now has to be dealt with.

In such situations your professionalism becomes evident. Always be in a position to react immediately to such changes and to modify your workshop in such a way that the maximum benefit is created for the participants. (Little homework for you: How many and which values and principles of the Agile Manifesto can be found in the last sentence?) So always keep the focus on the benefit or the learning objectives for the participants!

For you, this also means filling your facilitation suitcase in such a way that you can deviate from the planned course and enrich your workshop with unplanned games and simulations. Unfortunately, we cannot offer you concrete tips for games or approaches. In the end, you have to judge every deviation from the planned workshop situationally and find something that works well.

Online workshops have their own aspects due to the whole net-

worked technology, which need to be well prepared. You can find out more about this in the section Section 3.9.

In general, don't be disappointed if things don't go as planned. It will happen anyway. The better you handle such situations, the more respect everyone involved will have for you. Let's play some other time.

Awkward or clumsy - "I pass!"

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So how was I? - Feedback for you

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Attention! Let's go online

The success of an online workshop often hinges on meticulous preparation. In the digital realm, where technology is at the forefront, ensuring a seamless experience is paramount.

Especially with online workshops, you have to ask yourself how much you want to prepare in order to be able to react to all eventualities. Due to the massive use of technology and tools, there are a lot of potential risks for the smooth execution of your workshop.

In this section, we'll not only look at how to prepare for an online workshop, but also give you a few tips on how to conduct and follow up on it.

Preparation

Basic set-up

Check the lighting conditions and adjust them if necessary so that you are easy to see. An artificial area light or a camera that already comes with lighting will help here. It may seem silly to close the shutter and turn on the light in broad daylight. It might seem counterintuitive at first. But if your own camera image or the view on the screen is constantly spoiled thanks to changing clowds, that can be equally disruptive.

The batteries of all used devices have to be charged. For all-day workshops, consider switching to wired alternatives. If you only start frantically looking for the power supply when you get the message "5 minutes to shutdown," you're done with professionalism.

You know what really bugs us about basic set-up? We come to a client's organization and are asked to do a cool workshop or multi-day training. And then it's, "No, tool XY is not allowed in our organization." Or, "Miro won't go through our firewall, and we're not allowed to work without a VPN." Or: "We could try to take Microsoft Whiteboard. Unfortunately, our team can't do breakouts." Or, "It wouldn't be a problem at all with my computer at home, but I'm only allowed to do it on the company laptop."

These and similar obstacles are unfortunately part of the set-up. It's not just your equipment that has to work, but also that of the participants. And unfortunately, corporate IT and its security, guidelines and requirements keep throwing a spanner in the works. Everything may only take place in the VPN, external tools are not allowed, the firewalls are too restrictive, the employees torture

themselves with old hardware, there are no cameras and only the cheapest or no headsets. You can certainly continue the list with your own experiences.

Such difficulties do not only occur in a corporate context. Independent participants also bring some challenges. They try to access your virtual board with an underpowered tablet. Some have an ancient, no longer supported browser version installed. And in fact, there are always people who simply haven't had a chance to learn about current remote technology.

It is important for you to know the existing infrastructure in advance. Then you think about ways and alternatives that enable a successful remote workshop.

One example that we still encounter today: The video conferencing tool allowed cannot create breakout rooms. What can you do? Create a series of explicit video sessions that people can click into via link. You make these links available on the virtual whiteboard in one place. That way, participants can jump to where they need to be at any given time with a click of the mouse.

Oh yes, it's also a good idea to check BEFORE the workshop if your computer is due for any essential software updates (which of course require a reboot). Don't ask …

Backup system and components

We know colleagues who have set up a complete backup system with their own dedicated Internet line in order to be prepared in case the nearest data center of the telecommunications provider is hit by a meteorite. There's too much "prepping" involved for our taste. A spare mouse and keyboard in the cupboard, your laptop with all access points ready to hand as an alternative to the standalone computer, a smartphone on the table as a possible LTE hotspot–that's usually enough.

Pre-session for the technology check

For participants, it's best to offer a technology playground in advance. Check with people a few days in advance that their accesses to the virtual whiteboard and video conferencing are working. The basic operation of these tools can then also be practiced with the participants. Time and again, participants will find that this and that just doesn't work well with their tablet. After the technology check, they can then still find an alternative.

If a technology check is not feasible in advance, you can alternatively use an opener for the tool introduction (see below).

You may not need to do the technology check yourself if you have a person to support you as a co-moderator.

Co-moderation

A co-moderator, whom we'll refer to as 'Como', can be a game-changer in longer workshops. Como can be reached by participants at any time via a separate channel. This can be provided via email, phone, chat, etc. Como helps whenever participants show up late, have connectivity issues, or are offered a tech check.

Virtual Whiteboard

Create your own virtual whiteboard for the session you are planning. Use your preferred templates and put everything into frames. Frames are similar to a flipchart sheet in Miro, for example, which contains the information you want to show on a topic. You can design the "Welcome" frame, create a "Rules for this workshop" frame, let the participants fill in the "Questions from the team" frame, and put all the content-related topic blocks into corresponding frames. Frames help you with the moderation and you keep the overview. You always follow the red thread through the correctly sorted frame order. With a single click, you can navigate to

different sections, whether moving forward or revisiting previous content.

Set the start view to the frame or the area that the participants should see first on their screen after entering the board.

Go through all the elements on the board again and check which ones have to be locked for the participants. It happens again and again that everyone can move or delete the elements that were quickly copied in. This costs time and nerves and interrupts the flow of your moderation.

Pre-communication

Prior to the session, email participants with essential links, deadlines, and information to ensure a seamless process. This includes a list of minimum technical requirements and, most importantly, access to the tech check.

Remind participants to have beverages ready before the session begins to avoid disruptions. This includes having glasses ready to drink, for one thing. May sound petty, but it wouldn't be the first time that loud pouring by one person has caused a pause or delay. (Again, take it with humor, and it may indeed be just the right time to take a break). On the other hand, the group should also "take away" the consumed drinks every now and then, according to the motto of the bandit boss Santa Maria from the movie "The Shoe of Manitou": "Now everyone goes to the bathroom again, and then we ride off." [BULLY]

If you plan to record the remote session, ask participants for their permission beforehand.

If you plan to use cards for interaction (e.g., ELMO or other online session card sets), send them to participants or ask them to print or make their own. You should also send a short description of the idea right away.

Feedback system

Keep your feedback system up to date and editable for the participants. You have either already given out the access link in the preliminary communication, or you have it ready to hand and can be copied directly. Using QR codes for this purpose can be efficient. But even nowadays, not everyone has their smartphone at hand. So it's a good idea to offer a (preferably simple) URL in addition to the QR code.

Implementation

Time to arrive

Allow enough time for the start of the online workshop so that everyone is "technically there". We always hear statements like:

- "My Outlook was gone, I couldn't access the link."
- "The tool now wanted me to log in, but I don't have an account there."
- "I was still in the VPN, so I couldn't get onto the board."

These teething problems should be avoided if possible. In preparation, use the pre-session for the technology check. Your participants should come to the workshop relaxed, and ideally everything should already be working.

If technical difficulties do arise, use Como for co-moderation.

Co-moderation for technical and organizational issues

There have been online sessions where a lot of the time was spent troubleshooting the technical difficulties of individual participants.

This is very demotivating for the rest of the group and not conducive to anyone's goals. And because you would like to help those present, you are reluctant to say to those concerned: "We can't all solve your technical problem together here now. Please get out and join us again next time."

Como, your helping hand in the background, can help you in all these cases. Como takes care of the technical difficulties of the participants individually and makes sure that they can work effectively in the online session again as quickly as possible.

You may be wondering where you can get a Como. As an external service provider or in a company with enough employees, you ideally bring your Como yourself. If you're a freelancer on your own and responsible for everything, simply ask your client to provide you with a como from the company. Taking on the role of como is, of course, also an ideal introduction for those who want to get to grips with the topic of "remote facilitation" in more detail.

Special features of online games

For games and simulations with unique moderation considerations, we've provided specific descriptions.

Miscellaneous

- Backup for online connections: If you do experience a power or internet outage, resolve the issue if possible or switch to your backup system. For your participants, you can communicate the following meeting rule in advance: "If I am suddenly offline, please wait 5 minutes to see if I come right back up. If not, please take a 15 minute break. In the meantime, I will try to solve the problem and let you know as soon as possible. If I still haven't reappeared, please take an hour break until I activate my backup system."
- Don't take it for granted that people on a virtual whiteboard

are always aware and see where you are and what you are doing. Always get them back to you and ask if everyone is there.

- Don't forget to take breaks! It's best to define a good break schedule and stick to it. We always communicate the goal at the beginning of a workshop to take a break once an hour. This break should be between five and ten minutes long, depending on the situation. Pay particular attention to the body signals of the participants to determine the need for a break. Of course, all cameras must be activated for this. By the way: Even in times of vaporizers, five-minute breaks are usually too short for nicotine addicts. In such cases, consider whether it's okay to continue with the others already.

- Feel free to remind the group every now and then that they may use their ELMO cards.

- Use the breaks to recharge the batteries of your devices.

- If one person complains about performance problems on a virtual whiteboard, a possible quick fix is to turn off the other participants' position cursors. This has saved people with older laptops in some Miro sessions.

- You can sometimes overcome software access problems or even bans on internal corporate networks by using external groupware. By publicly accessing a Google document or Office 365 spreadsheet, participants can then work together.

- Practice muting. It happens all the time that we speak on mute or vice versa. Quickly muting and unmuting using keyboard shortcuts is sometimes very helpful. Some external mics have their own switches for this as well. And headsets with boom mics often offer the option to mute by flipping the mic away. In such cases, however, you need to make sure that you are unmuted on two channels.

- Ask the group to let you know directly if you sound like Darth Vader. You yourself won't notice your breathing into the microphone, so only external feedback will help.

- If you decide to work bottomless, please remember to turn off the camera before standing up. By the way, it would only be a half-hearted Kalsarikännit anyway, because you are sitting and working before a session after all. "Kalsarikännit" is one of the most beautiful words in the world for us. As homework we give you to find out for yourself what it means.
- At the end of the session, be sure to ask the group to give feedback. You don't let them go until they have done so. If the participants only give feedback after a delay, the response rate is much lower, and the answers are no longer as fresh and the immediate impression is lost.

Follow-up

- Create a PDF export of the virtual whiteboard directly after the session and send it to the participants. (Caution: In Miro, only content that is in frames is exported. Post-processing is often necessary here, especially if participants have added their own content to the board).
- When distributing the PDF, keep in mind that the documentation of interactive sessions is usually very context-dependent and will only be properly understood by those who were there. In other hands, it can easily be misinterpreted.
- If participants can still access the board for a longer period of time, it is best to lock editing and set the board to read-only.
- If further access is no longer intended, then turn off open access to the board completely. After all, no one should get accidental but unauthorized access.
- Consider carefully whether it is useful and helpful to conduct an explicit retrospective of your remote session. Collecting feedback will definitely help you to improve your workshop. However, a joint retrospective with the participants often seems superfluous to them. From our experience with un-conferences, some invest 25% of their time in a retrospective,

often with the belief that retrospectives are mandatory at the end of events. We say, "No, you don't have to!" Along the lines of, "Don't do shit! Unless it's funny!".

Disturbances and Sabotage

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Radical online passivity

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No one is playing with you

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You are the radio in the background

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Palim, Palim–when the mailman rings twice

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Getting Offtopic

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Don't tell me!

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Powerfully evil

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People and machines

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This is our room

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You invite

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Games for Framing
and Structure

4: Creating Groups

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, working together is success."

— *Henry Ford (1863–1947), automobile pioneer.*

The games in this chapter are not agile games in the strict sense. For facilitating a workshop or training, you often want to divide the people present into small groups or a certain number of subgroups. For this purpose, we show you a number of possibilities in this chapter. We dedicate a separate chapter to this topic so that you can find them clearly in one place.

Sorting and Counting

People who know each other tend to stand together and often form the same groups. With a few simple tricks, you as a facilitator can break this habit. The technique to do this follows the pattern

1. Line up in a row,
2. count through,
3. form groups.

The criteria you use to line people up is up to you. If you just want to mix them up, you can leave this point out. The group will most likely stand (or sit) in order of familiarity. Simply counting through here will automatically lead to a healthy mixture.

If heterogeneous groups are important to you, e.g. in terms of experience in a topic, simply have the participants line up according

to this experience–as seen in Figure 4.1–before they count through
once. This also automatically leads to an opener, as people need to
talk to each other to share their experiences with each other and
then line up in order.

Figure 8.1. Line up the participants by experience.

If no specific criteria come to mind, but you want a new mix, use
something simple like length of time with the company or even
shoe size. There are practically no limits to your imagination.
Try having people sort by the number of letters in their mother's
maiden name.

And you're sure to get the first laugh when you casually remark
afterwards, "And now for the hard part: Who remembers their
number from counting?"

Same Objects

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Experience Corners

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Virtual Circle

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5: Opener

"You can get to know a person better in an hour playing a game than in conversation in a year."

— *Plato (427–348 or 347 BC)*

To start a meeting or open a workshop or training, it is helpful to begin with a welcoming activity. The following games can be used to help participants get to know each other, and they are great for bringing a positive mood to the session.

Get to Know You - Bingo

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Source

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Something True and Positive

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Brilliant Moments

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Virtual Social Network

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Black Stories

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Two Truths and a Lie

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Procedure and Facilitation

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Profile for the Team

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How much am I here right now

Type and purpose
   Opener
Medium
   Remote and in-person
Level
   Easy
Group Size
   Any
Duration
   5 minutes, optionally longer if group is larger

Learning Objectives

The 'How much am I here right now' activity serves as an effective opener for workshops and meetings. It gauges the participants' current state of mind and level of focus.

Participants gauge the level of focus and presence of each contributor in the group for the duration of the workshop, training, or meeting.

Materials Needed

- Nothing but those present
- Remote: a virtual whiteboard

Preparation

Set up an oblong area for all participants. A strip between the door and the windows of the training room is usually sufficient.

For the remote version, prepare an area like the one in Figure 5.1.
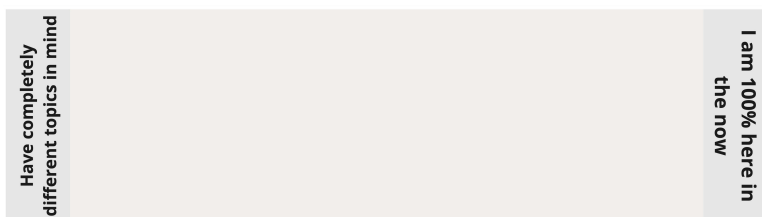
Figure 9.1. How much am I here right now?

Procedure and Facilitation

Ask the participants "How much are you here in our workshop today?. Sometimes we have other issues on our minds that take away from our focus, perhaps. Other days we are completely relaxed and nothing can stop us from living in the moment right now. Please stand somewhere between the door and the windows, depending on how much you are here right now. If you have other issues on your mind, or perhaps your time would be better spent doing something else, position yourself towards the door. If you are 100% in the here and now with us, position yourself at the windows. And of course, appropriately, somewhere in between."

Allow participants a moment to position themselves.

For the remote version, participants can place their icons or markers on the virtual whiteboard to indicate their current state of mind. The result is a picture like the one in the following figure.

Figure 9.2. How much am I here right now? -- example

Now ask individuals or subgroups for what reason they positioned themselves exactly there. So you'll find out with the whole group that Volker is waiting for a call from the delivery room, Vincent is getting a visit from the handyman sometime today, Veronika is under power because of a deadline tonight, and Valeria needs to click the *Go Live* button briefly on demand.

The advantage for everyone now is that none of these things known in advance come as a surprise.

Purposes in Detail

Opener

This exercise is really just an opener–but a very effective one. Participants open up to the group with their names and a brief explanation of their positioning on the scale. As an opening activity, this exercise is both engaging and usually sufficient to set the tone.

Source

Björn Jensen, a seasoned workshop facilitator and our esteemed colleague, frequently uses this activity to kickstart his sessions.

Dobble

Type
> Opener to pass the time until everyone is there.

Purposes
> Energizer, Opener

Medium
> Remote and in-person

Level
> Easy

Group Size
> The group size should be limited to the number of participants who can comfortably view a palm-sized card. Online, however, the group size can be almost unlimited.

Duration
> a few minutes

Learning Objectives

In the 'Dobble' card game, participants hone their focus by identifying identical symbols across two cards. This game serves as an effective energizer to sharpen attention.

Materials Needed

The 'Dobble' card game is available for purchase at toy stores. Each card of the game contains exactly eight symbols. The interesting thing is that any two cards have exactly one symbol in common. Figure 5.1 shows an example of three cards from the original game.

Preparation

Place participants around a table or in a circle so that everyone can see the cards you draw from the deck.

Figure 9.3. Three cards from the game "Dobble".

For the remote version, ensure the cards are displayed clearly to the camera when held up. Green screen and virtual backgrounds often make objects appear transparent or invisible. Unfortunately, some of the icons themselves are green. If this is a problem, you should simply sort these out beforehand. For all card games, the general rule is that a document camera helps with focus and against blur.

Procedure and Facilitation

Take any two cards from the deck and show them to the group.

"On these two cards, there is exactly one symbol in common.

Which one is it?"

Wait for someone to find it and say it. Then put away one of the two cards and draw a new card from the deck in its place.

Continue the game for as long as participants are engaged and enjoying it.

Purposes in Detail

Energizer
> This game can be introduced spontaneously as a quick energizer during breaks. Participants refocus on one thing at a time. This focus and increased concentration will remain for the following module in your workshop.

Opener
> Dobble serves as an excellent opener for workshops or training sessions, especially when waiting for all participants to arrive. You can then simply bridge the time with a few rounds of Dobble.

Source

We were once again inspired by Jordann Gross, who had presented the game in an online session. How fitting that it was already in the game closet of Dennis' kids.

For those interested in the mathematics behind Dobble, several explanatory videos are available online. A nice explanation is provided on MirKat Maths YouTube channel [DOBBLEMATH].

Hometowns

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Learning Objectives

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Anagram

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6: Energizer

"Am I old? My child, I will be old on the day, when I
no longer like to play."

— *Paul Schibler (1930–2015), Swiss aphorist.*

There are moments when the energy and activity levels of partic-
ipants dip significantly. This could be after an exhaustive theory
session or post-lunch drowsiness. The energizers discussed here
aim to rejuvenate the group, pumping fresh oxygen into their
brains.

Happy Salmon

Type
> Energizer with a lot of physical activity

Purposes
> Energizer, Positive Mood, Fun

Medium
> In-person, only, because all attempts to reproduce this fun
> online have gone completely unsuccessful for us

Level
> Easy

Group Size
> 3 to 6 people, with more game sets arbitrarily expandable

Duration
> Explained in one minute, played in one minute

Materials Needed

The game "Happy Salmon" [HAPPYSALMON] is required. It is expandable with the help of additional sets for larger groups (green and blue versions).

Happy Salmon is also expandable with the card set *Funky Chicken.* Same principle, more content–this increases the number of activities.

Preparation

In the basic version, the game contains four different activity patterns, each of which is depicted on the cards. Each person is dealt a deck of three cards for each of the four activities, or twelve cards. Each person shuffles their deck and holds it face down in their hand.

Procedure and Facilitation

The goal is to be the first person to have discarded all cards. On your signal, everyone reveals their top card and tries to find a second person who has an identical card. This can be done by shouting and using expressive gestures. If two players with identical cards are found, the task is to recreate what is depicted on the cards, for example, actions such as giving a high-five or bumping fists in a 'checker' manner. Once the action is done, the card is dropped, a new card is turned over and a new opponent with the same card is sought. Whoever has no more cards in their hand shouts "Finn-ish!" loudly. Yes, the joke[1] is a bit weird. But somehow it belongs to it.

---

[1]Good jokes are like good source code. They need no explanation. This one, unfortunately, does: "Finish" as an English word for "finished", combined with a long drawn-out Finnnn for English "fin" - fin. So from salmon. Salmon fin. Ha ha.

Follow-up

Pick up the cards and sort them back into their appropriate sets.

Notes and Hints

The game is a quick energizer, suitable for all group sizes. However, the group should not be too small. You can definitely participate after your introduction. Who wins the round is not important, but can be used as a small "reward" for subsequent activities.

Pitfalls

The game can be overwhelming for those sensitive to loud noises and heightened activity. It's essential to be mindful of this. Also, touching other people is part of the game. You should explain this to the participants beforehand and obtain their consent.

Occasionally, some participants might opt out by saying "I pass". Respect this benevolently and just let them observe the great fun that follows. They may want to join in the next time.

Purposes in Detail

Energizer
This game is the perfect energizer in the afternoon when all participants are just hanging around tired and digesting. Wild, chatty, lots of movement and even more laughter. You will hardly find a better energizer.

Positive Mood
The game is so wacky that you just have to laugh. This mood lasts for a while, and you can very well take it into the next module of your workshop.

Fun If there is one thing Happy Salmon can do, it is to make the participants laugh.

Source

The inspiration for introducing 'Happy Salmon' in Agile workshops came from Jordann Gross at the Play4Agile conference in Rückersbach and has since taken the agile community by storm.

More information about the game and other variants can be found at [HAPPYSALMON].

Inverse Musical Chairs

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Rock-Paper-Scissors

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The Plank

Type
    Physical energizer with mental benefits
Purpose
    Energizer
Medium
    In-person
Level
    No previous knowledge necessary

Group Size
    Any number of people
Duration
    2 minutes

Learning Objectives

To introduce a physical activity that can help revitalize participants and promote mental alertness.

Materials Needed

- A stopwatch.
- Optional: A flipchart or presentation showcasing a correctly executed plank.
- Optional: Music with a duration of at least two minutes.

Preparation

Set stopwatch for two minutes. Make music ready to play. Make flipchart or presentation visible.

Procedure and Facilitation

Introduction: "If you need energy and want to do something good for your body, I invite you to do the plank with me for two minutes. The plank is a great exercise to engage multiple muscle groups and boost your energy.

To do this, lie on your stomach and then, at my signal, lift your whole body up onto your toes and forearms. Hold the plank for two minutes until I say 'Stop!' Are we ready? Let's begin!"

Start stopwatch, run music, do plank for two minutes with whole group.

Remote Facilitation

This game may be feasible online. However, few cameras will show the floor, no one can see their own screen from there. So it easily becomes a "we're all off for two minutes now". Unfortunately, that usually doesn't help.

For remote sessions, participants can give a thumbs up to indicate they're ready and a thumbs down when they need to stop. This way, even if cameras don't show the floor, there's some level of interaction.

Pitfalls

Do not force participants to do this exercise.

During an all-day event, you can do this exercise two or even three times a day. More people will participate each time.

Always remind participants to listen to their bodies. If they feel any discomfort, they should stop immediately.

Debriefing Tips

When participants ask what this is for, you can answer that physical activity is for getting fresh oxygen to the brain. This helps for any kind of creativity and knowledge work. Also, the mischievously delivered hint that this is a proven way to shorten too long Daily Scrums has already earned us laughs and recognition in the past.

Purposes in Detail

Energizer

This game is a pure energizer to get fresh oxygen back into the brain. It can be used throughout the day at all breaks and stages. The plank not only serves as a physical break but also as a mental reset, helping participants to refocus on the next session or activity.

Source

Learned from Marc at Craig Larman's LeSS training. (Craig is one of the inventors of the LeSS framework for scaling Scrum with multiple teams in large organizations.)

Rain Maker

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Snowball Fight

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Pomodoro Break

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Scavenger Hunt

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Walk'n'Talk

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Learn to Juggle

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7: Closing

"In the end, only what we have done and lived counts–
and not what we have longed for."

— *Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931), Austrian author*

The following activities may not be games in the true sense of
the word. However, we would like to give you a few ideas on
how to conclude a workshop or training in such a way that your
participants are more likely to turn their insights into action.

Letter to Myself

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Study Buddy

Type
    Joint commitment to closing
Purposes
    Closing, Initiating Action, Trust Building
Medium
    Remote and in-person
Level
    Easy
Group Size
    Any
Duration
    10 minutes

Learning Objectives

Participants will pair up and commit to reminding each other of their post-workshop goals.

Materials Needed

Slips of paper and pens for all participants.

In the remote version, you will need a video conferencing tool with breakout rooms.

Procedure and Facilitation

"Please gather in pairs." (If the group size is odd, a group of three will also work).

"Share your goals and planned actions after this workshop/training. Take notes if necessary. Set up a time to meet by phone, virtually, or actually and remind each other of your goals and actions."

For remote sessions, pairing may take slightly longer. You can prepare pairing areas on a virtual whiteboard for participants to sign their names and get together. You can have them chat to request each other as buddies. Or, you can provide as many breakout rooms as pairings are needed and just have people go into the rooms by themselves to find their buddies.

Give the groups five to eight minutes to discuss and exchange contact information, if necessary.

Purposes in Detail

Closing

This activity usually takes place at the end of a workshop or training. In fact, there is nothing at all wrong with forming pairs at the beginning or during the event. They can then already prepare for their subsequent exchange. Nevertheless,

we are dealing here with a classic Closing, since the actual work of the pairs takes place afterwards.

Initiating Action

By establishing the pairs, a certain commitment is created to continue working on their own topics and exchanging ideas after the workshop or training. This significantly increases the likelihood that the implementation of the next steps will actually take place.

Trust Building

The two participants will work together and exchange ideas in the follow-up. This activity fosters trust, especially within the pairs.

Source

Unknown. And actually, we already have enough Stone Age jokes.

Homework

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Learning Objectives

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Games and Simulations

8: Teaching Principles

"Orientation in the world is best found through the means of play."

— *Elmar Schenkel (*1953), Anglist, author, translator, painter.*

In order to understand agile ways of working and to be able to comprehend for what reason they should be lived, it is necessary to deal with the agile basics and principles. The games in this category illustrate different principles and make them tangible for the participants.

Coin Flip Game

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Boss-Worker Game

Type
> Servant Leadership Principle

Purposes
> Lean Principles, Push-versus-Pull Principle, Self-Organization, Servant Leadership

Medium
> Remote and in-person

Level
> Relatively easy to moderate

Group Size
> From 10 people, no upper limit; for the remote version from 6 people

Duration
> 10 minutes

Learning Objectives

The game illustrates how in the agile world the classic *command-and-control* role of managers is changing to a *servant-leadership* role. One of the fundamental ideas of Scrum from the paper "The New New Product Development Game". [TAKEUCHI-NONAKA] is made visible here: A self-organizing team works better if it is not directed from the outside; a Scrum team continuously passes the balls to itself.

To illustrate the difference between the two roles/leadership styles, push systems with leader and pull systems with servant leader are used in the game.

Materials Needed

Limited space with chairs, tables, wastebaskets, etc. that can be placed in the room as obstacles.

For the remote version you need a virtual whiteboard with a prepared "room" as seen in Figure 8.1. In the example, we show a 6 × 6 space in which the game pieces are allowed to move. There are obstacles on some of the squares.

We use arrows labeled with letters as game pieces (see Figure 8.2). The number of game pieces corresponds to the number of participants.
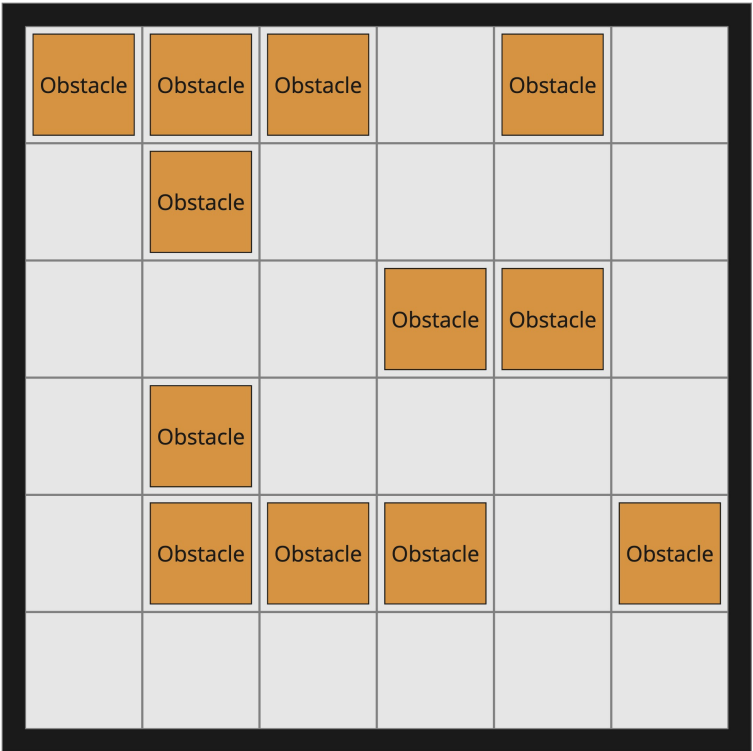
Figure 13.1. Playing field for the remote version of the Boss-Worker-Game
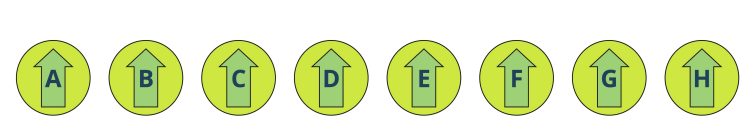
Figure 13.2. Game pieces for the remote version of the Boss-Worker-Game

Preparation

The room is equipped with the existing obstacles and reduced in size so that the participants can no longer run freely in circles. (Variation: The room is not equipped with obstacles until the

second round).

The participants get together in pairs and determine which of them is the boss and which is the worker.

Remaining people and those who don't want to participate or already know the game become helpers and stay with the crowd of people.

In the remote version, all players choose a character. If you can't remember the letter of your own character, you are of course welcome to edit it yourself and rename it to suit you. Let people play around with their character a bit. They need to be able to move and rotate their figure. When they are ready, everyone can sit down on a free space in the prepared room. The whole thing will look like in Figure 8.1.

Figure 13.3. Playing field with game pieces of the remote version of the Boss-Worker-Game.

Procedure and Facilitation

Each Boss places himself directly behind his Worker and remains at this distance during the first round. The pairs have the task to "produce" as many steps as possible in the given space within one minute. A step has a normal step length. Small steps as well as constantly stepping back and forth do not count as valid steps.

In the first round, the boss gives verbal commands to his worker: "forward", "turn left", "turn right" and "stop". The worker has to follow these commands without making his own decisions about

his movement.

After one minute, the first round ends and the worker is briefly asked how many steps have been produced.

In the second round, each worker is now free to decide how to move. The bosses become Servant Leaders and have the task of removing all obstacles in the way of their Workers. For example, they move all the chairs and trash cans to the side or even push the tables against the walls in pairs to clear the area in the middle as much as possible. The goal of a Servant Leader is to provide the best possible work environment for the Workers and do everything possible to make it as easy as possible for them to get their work done.

After one minute you will be asked again how many steps were produced in the second round.

As a variation, you can shorten the second round to 30 seconds. Participants will be amazed to find that in half the time they have produced at least as many steps as in the first round of one minute.

Remote Facilitation

Each pair gets their own video conference room so they can communicate on their own. Unfortunately, this already presents a certain hurdle. In your moderation you have to send the couples to their rooms and agree beforehand which signal on the board is the starting signal. This can be a pre-set timer or an "attention-start-combination", where you expose the underlying start card at the right time (see Figure 8.1).
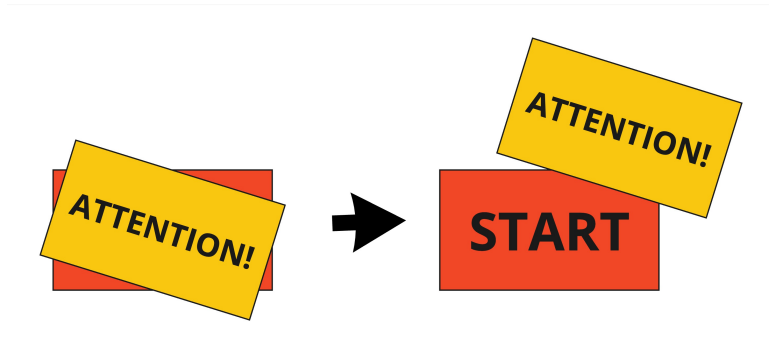
Figure 13.4. **Visual start signal on a virtual whiteboard for a remote round**.

The pairs now have 60 seconds to run as many squares as possible, as in the in-person version. The worker only listens to the commands of his boss. The worker may only run in the direction in which the arrow of the game figure points. So the figure must be turned actively again and again. This usually results in a wonderful chaos, which we can observe but unfortunately not hear due to the paired separees. It will definitely come up at the debriefing.

After the first round, you have to make sure that all the pairings come back to the main room. Now explain the freedoms that are given in the second round. The bosses from the first round can decide for themselves how to support the Workers as Servant Leaders. Clearing the obstacles works the same way as moving the game pieces in this round. The "Obstacle" boxes can simply be moved one space at a time.

Send the pairs back to their private rooms and start the second round. For the debriefing afterwards, bring everyone back to the main room.

Follow-up

Return the room to its original state.

Notes and Hints

The available space should not be too generous. Depending on the number of participants, it may be necessary to massively limit the space. Rule of thumb: people should not be able to comfortably walk past each other at a distance.

For the remote version, at least one third of the available spaces should be occupied by obstacles.

Some couples may forget to count their steps. Not a big deal. You can point out beforehand that measuring the work output is also part of the exercise. We let the participants decide for themselves who will do the counting. And if one team does end up saying "I don't know how many," that's usually perfectly okay. You'll still be able to tell afterwards if there were fewer or more steps in the second run.

Debriefing Tips

The following questions are asked of participants:

- "How did it feel to be controlled by a boss?"
- "How did it feel to steer a worker?"
- "What was different in the second round?"
- "What does this mean for your work environment?"
- "What examples do you find there of push and pull systems?"
- "What changes for both roles as a result of an agile transition?"

Pitfalls

Of course, the obstacles hold the potential for injuries. Also the often heard joke "If my boss doesn't say stop, do I have to run into the wall?" already shows that you have to be careful here. It's

crucial to emphasize that participants should avoid any actions that might lead to injuries.

Oh yes, there are the usual smart alecks. The ones who just walk up and down on the edge. Or those who make an effort in the first round and rather bob along in the second. Don't let that get you down. The result doesn't have to be that every team really got X% better. The general tenor will be that. Outliers only make the picture more realistic.

Purposes in Detail

Lean Principles

Three of the five Lean principles are made visible through this game: "Create Flow," "Introduce Pull," and "Continuous Improvement." Participants create flow by actively avoiding obstacles in the second round. They no longer stop and have to decide anew where to go next, but keep the flow going in anticipation. Continuous improvement is demonstrated by the bosses' work as servant leaders. There, the space is gradually made more and more accessible so that the entire system can flow more easily. We have dedicated a separate purpose to the pull principle below.

Push-versus-Pull Principle

This game clearly shows the difference between a push and a pull system. The two rounds of the game depict exactly these two systems. For the participants, it is immediately noticeable and visible how the two systems differ.

Self-Organization

Self-organization takes place quite visibly in the second round. The person doing the work makes their own decisions and organizes their work themselves. In the first round, the leading person stops all efforts of the working person to go his own way. An objection may be that this game shows self-organization only at the individual level. Our response, "If self-organization already leads to such

benefits in individuals, how great must the benefits be in a self-organizing team?"

Servant Leadership

This exercise shows the difference between micro-management at the individual level and servant leadership for an entire team. Once the leader is freed from management constraints, he or she not only removes obstacles for the person doing the work, but with his or her new behavior, he or she also helps the entire working team benefit and make better progress.

Source

The term "Servant Leadership" was first introduced to the world by Robert K. Greenleaf in the book of the same name [GREENLEAF].

The oldest description of the game that we can find is by Michele Sliger and was published by her under the name "Sixty Steps in the Right Direction" [SLIGER]. According to her, she learned about the game from Jean Tabaka. Unfortunately, there is no more opportunity to ask Jean about it.

Push vs. Pull in a Minute

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Counting Numbers and Letters

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Multitasking Name Game

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Business Value Poker

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Magic Triangle

Type
      Principle of dynamics of complex systems
Purposes
      Identify and Overcome Impediments, Complex Systems, Self-Organization
Medium
      Remote and in-person
Level
      Easy
Group Size
      10 to 30 people
Duration
      About 30 minutes

Learning Objectives

Participants understand the interdependencies in complex systems and the effects of change. The principle of cause and effect is tangibly illustrated. Small changes can lead to significant effects in system dynamics.

Materials Needed

Nothing else is needed except a large room or open space.

For the remote version, you will need a virtual whiteboard on which the mouse pointers of all participants can be seen.

Preparation

Make sure that you have a large, free area available with the group. Move all chairs, tables and other furniture out of the room or to the side so that they do not restrict the group's free movement.

Remote, you simply provide an empty virtual whiteboard. That's all it takes.

Procedure and Facilitation

"Each one of you, please secretly pick two other people from the group. They must not know that you have chosen them. With these two people, you now form–without them knowing–an equilateral triangle. This means that the distance between all three people is the same. The length of the sides is not limited, it doesn't matter if you stand very close or very far apart.

Now please move until this task is solved and the whole system has come to rest. This may well take a while. Let's go."

When the system has come to a halt after a few minutes, the first short interim debriefing takes place:

- "What just became visible in this system?"
- "What did you just experience?"
- "How did you feel about the role?"
- "What does this have to do with your work environment?"

Now you bring a change to the stable system. Depending on the size of the group, you remove one or two people from the system.

"Your system is currently stable and at rest. Now let's see what happens if we remove one or two elements from your system. Marvin, would you please go out and take an observer position? All of you who have now lost one person from your triangle, please find two new people. So, let's see what effect this little change has on your system. Let's go."

Again, wait until the system reaches a steady state and no further movement is seen.

If there is no movement in the system at all, because the person removed was not included in any other triangle, you can say,

"Interesting what just happened. There are occasionally single elements in a system that no other element depends on. Marvin, would you please take your place again? Amy, may I ask you to leave the system and go into the observer position? To all others: Whoever has now lost a person in the triangle, please choose new people. Are you all ready? Okay, here we go."

Remote Facilitation

If you want to play this game online, there's nothing stopping you. In our favorite tool, Miro, it's extremely easy. Just ask all participants to turn on the mouse pointer display. Then get the people on the whiteboard to join you, and you're ready to go. Even if some are not logged in by name, each mouse pointer has a unique label. If some in the group don't have a computer that can do this: no problem. Just share your screen. Or–if performance is an issue for you, too–ask a participant with more powerful hardware to start sharing. And if all this doesn't work or the tool you are using doesn't allow such a thing: don't despair. Just use stickies. Or simple rectangular boxes with the names inside.

Debriefing Tips

Now that the system has settled down, you can start the final debriefing:

- "What did removing people from the system change?"
- "Who had to move? Who was able to remain in position?"
- "What observations were the removed persons able to make?"
- "Where were the removed persons' reference persons before the change, and where are they now? How much change has taken place overall?"
- "Imagine a similar dynamic in a real team. We are always dealing with a human system where no one can predict the behavior of other team members. A team is already a

complex system by the very fact that it is made up of people. We don't behave deterministically, but are unconsciously controlled by our emotions and values."

- "What transfer can you make from this insight to collaborative teamwork and planning your projects?"

Purposes in Detail

Identify and Overcome Impediments

In this exercise, participants are in a complex, dynamic system and attempt to create a stable state from their perspective. From this individual perspective, the movements of all other participants represent massive impediments that are also in no way predictable. In the first, simple inference, this reveals the complex behavior of social systems. Wherever people have something to do with each other, chaotic behavior can arise without individuals being responsible for it or without this behavior happening deliberately. Transferred to projects or technical systems, this exercise shows that the overall system can get into a chaotic state at any time due to small influences of other elements. In each of these cases, we are dealing with impediments from the perspective of a stable overall system.

Complex Systems

This exercise illustrates the non-deterministic behavior of complex systems. The individual attempt to create a stable system sometimes turns into a wild chaos, calms down again and again in the meantime, and can develop into a chaotic behavior again at any time. The participants experience how the smallest changes in individual system parts (other participants) can lead to extremely dynamic behavior of the overall system. The behavior of social systems such as a team, but also technical systems and their dependencies, such as software systems, are always complex. This makes it virtually

impossible to get to grips with them using conventional methods. It takes agile approaches to deal with the dynamics of complex systems.

Self-Organization

The framework of this game is the only thing that is given to the participants as rules. They are entirely responsible as individuals, for adhering to this framework and organizing themselves into a stable system. In the interaction of all individuals, this becomes a team responsibility of self-organization. In the complex dynamics that arise, no one from an external perspective would be able to organize all system elements "correctly" either. This can only happen from within the system itself. The only way to define and change the system from the outside is through the framework conditions.

Source

We have known this game for many years from various conferences and trainings. An original source is no longer traceable.

Resource Utilization Trap

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Round 1

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Round 2

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Round 3

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Evaluation

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9: Simulations

"Play is the highest form of research."

— *Albert Einstein* (1879–1955)

Similar to the games for teaching agile principles in the previous chapter, the games in this category make agile practices tangible to participants. These games also teach the basics and principles of agile working. Here, however, the focus is even more on the concrete application of certain methods that can then be used in one's own daily work and context.

Scrum LEGO® City Game

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Phase 1: The Vision

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Phase 2: Story Writing and Role Assignment

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Phase 3: Prepare Backlog and Sprint.

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Phase 4: Sprint Planning and Refinement

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Phase 5: Development

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Phase 7: Sprint Retrospective

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Phase 8: Release planning (optional)

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Phase 4: Third Round with Advanced System

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Phase 5: Fourth and final round.

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Phase 6: From the game to the real Kanban board.

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Ball Point Game

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The House of Santa Claus

Type
> Simulation of some important elements of the Scrum framework.

Purposes
> Cross-Functional Teams, Empirical Process Control, Iterative and Incremental Development, Reflection, Scrum, Self-Organization

Medium
> Remote and in-person

Level
> Understanding of the included principles and practices should be present, the facilitation itself is moderately difficult.

Group Size
> From 4 persons, open to the top

Duration
> 30 minutes

Learning Objectives

As a remote alternative to the Ball Point Game, The House of Santa Claus allows you to understand the core of Scrum: empirical process control. You can also do the whole facilitation live in person.

Materials Needed

- In-person: paper and pens in 6 different colors
- Remote: virtual whiteboard
- Timer to measure time

Preparation

Prepare sheets of paper and pens for each group of tables. In the remote version, create an area for each team as shown in Figure 9.1. The actual workspace for the team can be extended as far to the right as you like, so there is room for many Santa houses.

Team #1

Participant Color	Rules	Process
Name	You may only continue drawing where it was left off	90 seconds **Planning**
Name	Same colors must not touch each other	90 seconds **Doing (Draw)**
Name	Everyone can use only one color	90 seconds **Reflection**
Name	After one stroke the color must be changed	
Name	Copy-and-paste is forbidden	
Name	Name of the Scout	
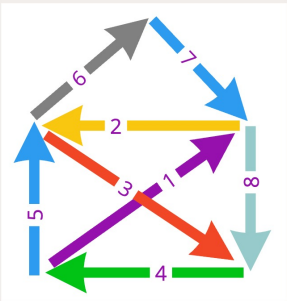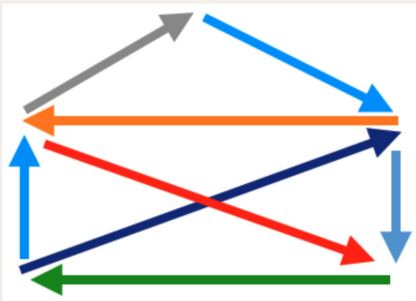
Figure 14.1. House of Santa Claus Team Area

Teams will find a way to distribute the colors they need to each team member. Also, the rules and procedure for each round are explicitly stated here. After all, no one can say that they did not know. For those who can't remember how to draw Santa's house,

there is an animation or a numbered flowchart.

Procedure and Facilitation

"The goal of this game is to draw as many Santa Claus houses as possible in the allotted time of one round.

Please find your groups and gather together. Each group will consist of four to seven people. One person will be assigned the role of Scout and will not draw. The other people divide the six different colors among themselves. Each team member should have one or two colors. The scout makes sure that the phases are carried out and that the time boxes are respected.

When drawing the houses, you may only continue where you left off. At the point where the previous person picked up their pencil, they immediately continue drawing with the next color.

After each stroke in a color, the color must be changed. Same colors must not touch each other in the whole house! And copy and paste is out[1]."

Now make sure everyone understands the rules so far. Answer questions if necessary.

"Each round will run as follows:

- 90 seconds preparation: Think about the tactics for implementation and answer the question about how you as a team will specifically proceed in this round.
- 90 seconds implementation: The goal is to work together to build as many houses as possible (following the rules).
- Evaluate results: How many finished houses were produced?
- 90 seconds reflection: Where is the greatest potential for improvement? Which of these will you address in preparation for the next round?"

---

[1]We are really very sorry. But when something is right out, we always have to make the comparison and use the count to five with the holy hand grenade of Antioch! [HOLYGRAIL].

Again, it is important to check that everything has been understood.

Especially during the reflection period, you and the Scouts in your role as facilitators need to make sure that the teams don't look for quick fixes, but identify the root causes of the greatest difficulties as areas for improvement.

Have teams play at least four rounds so that they can develop some routine and learn from the experience of drawing and working together.

Beginning with Round 2, after the teams have considered their tactics, ask them to estimate how many houses they will produce. This will help them think about their actual production capacity.

Immediately after the first round, take some of the houses that have been built and comment on them for everyone. "This is a very nice one. Can I put my closet in there?" [MURPHY]. Or: "This one is totally crooked. The structural engineer must have been drunk!" Or: "With the gaps in the walls, there's drafts all over the place. Think of the heating bills in the winter." Make it clear again that quality is an important aspect of the work and cannot be neglected. It is not about "rattling off" a result as quickly as possible.

Debriefing Tips

Ask participants the following reflection questions

- "In which round were you more in control of your work? (The first round or the last round?)"
- "What did you notice during the game?"
- "What worked well?"
- "What did you find difficult?"
- "What did you find in tune?"
- "What did you realize about empirical process control?"

- "Where in a good environment do we find the aspects you experienced?"
- "How did you get your quality under control?"

Purposes in Detail

Scrum
The learning objective of this game is to teach and experience the Scrum framework. Participants go through sprints in a minimal variation. Very short planning and review meetings surround the production of Santa houses. A more intensive retrospective ends the sprints. Daily Scrum events are not planned in this game, as they would exceed the time frame or lead ad absurdum.

Cross-Functional Teams
Cross-functionality is represented in this game by the responsibilities of the different roles (colors). The team works together to figure out how to best use their individual skills for a common solution.

Empirical Process Control
This game shows empirical process control through the iterative approach and continuous improvement of the process after each round.

Iterative and Incremental Development
This game is played in multiple rounds (iterations) to provide empirical process control. The "incremental" aspect does not come into play and can be neglected here.

Reflection
At the end of each iteration, a review takes place. In this retrospective, the experiences of the round are reflected upon and changes derived from them are identified and implemented in the next iteration.

Self-Organization
The participants are solely responsible for building a working

system and improving it over the course of the sprints. This is pure self-organization used to develop a good solution to a problem.

Source

Ralf Kruse developed this game as a remote variant of the Ball Point Game [KRUSE-SANTACLAUS].

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10: Social Dynamics and Communication

"Play is necessary for the conduct of a human life."

— *Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274)*

In addition to all the applicable practices and methods, the social, interpersonal aspects in teams and among colleagues are a critical success factor for a successful agile organization. The interactions between people need to be lived in a way that builds trust, communication, recognition, and team spirit. The games in this category support the further development of the various aspects of team building and good cooperation in teams.

Yes, exactly!

Type
> To create a positive atmosphere in communication, to find ideas.

Purposes
> Energizer, Idea Generation, Stimulating Creativity, Opener, Positive Mood, Fun, Trust Building

Medium
> Remote and in-person

Level
> Easy

Group Size
> Minimum 2 people

Duration

    5 to 15 minutes

Learning Objectives

Generate new ideas by unconditionally accepting what the other person says.

Preparation

Participants should meet in pairs. Alternatively, form a circle.

Remote, send pairs to their own breakout rooms. For a larger group circle, you can use a *Virtual Circle*.

Procedure and Facilitation

First, you need to set a question or topic for the players to talk about. You can either specify something yourself, or simply allow the participants to choose a topic. For a training session or a retrospective on a particular topic, we recommend the former.

Person A begins with a first statement that comes to mind. Person B responds with joyful enthusiasm, "Yes, exactly!" and immediately adds his own association, idea, statement, extension, etc. The next person responds with an equally enthusiastic "Yes, exactly!" and adds his or her own idea to the statement. This game continues in a circle.

Good ideas are written down.

The game continues until enough ideas have been generated.

Follow-up

The ideas found can now be sorted, clustered, evaluated, etc.

Notes and Hints

As with improvisational theater, this method is about making the other person look good. All statements are received positively and not improved or criticized.

Pitfalls

Every "Yes, exactly!" should be followed by an "and" with your own statement. Many people are conditioned to "yes, but" language. Therefore, during the introduction, make sure that everyone responds with "Yes, exactly! And…".

Purposes in Detail

Energizer
> You can easily use this exercise as a quick energizer in between sessions. It lightens the mood and makes people laugh.

Idea Generation
> By constantly agreeing and affirming what has been expressed so far, new and sometimes wilder ideas emerge. Participants associate and contribute ideas.

Stimulating Creativity
> The open atmosphere of this exercise strengthens the creative veins in participants. Associations expand and become bolder as the exercise progresses.

Opener
> You can also use this exercise to open a workshop or training. It is especially useful when the participants already know each other.

Positive Mood
> The positive attitude of this exercise creates a positive feeling among the participants.

Fun The creative ideas are sometimes so crazy that the participants have to laugh. There is a lot of fun in this exercise in most cases.

Trust Building

At least the two participants of a couple deepen their trust in each other. Therefore, this exercise can be used as one of many small levers to maintain trust within the team.

Source

First experienced by Marc at the XP-Days 2011 in Karlsruhe with Nicole Rauch.

Australian Floating Wood

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Human Knot

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Exercise Without A Name - EWAN McGregor

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Fearless Journey

Type
    Finding strategies to remove obstacles from the real work environment.

Purposes
    Idea Generation, Identify and Overcome Impediments, Reflection

Medium
    Remote and in-person

Level
    Easy to facilitate, knowledge of the patterns from the book "Fearless Change". [MANNS-RISING] should be available

Group Size
    Up to 6 people

Duration
    30 to 60 minutes

Learning Objectives

The team learns new ways of doing things, gains confidence that its goal is achievable, learns to make good decisions together, and develops cooperation and appreciation.

Materials Needed

You will need 40 small, blank index cards. Also download the way cards, start and goal cards, and strategy cards online at

https://fearlessjourney.info/. Print them, if possible on sturdy paper, and cut them into individual cards accordingly.

The strategy consist of the 48 Change Patterns from the book "Fearless Change". Figure 10.1 shows three examples of the strategy cards.

Hometown Story

To help people see the usefulness of the new idea, encourage those who have had success with it to share their stories.

People who haven't used the new idea may not be aware that other people have used it successfully.

Encourage individuals to share their experiences with the new idea in an informal, highly interactive session.

From: FEARLESS CHANGE: Patterns for introducing
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Piggyback

When faced with several obstacles in your strategy to introduce something new, look for a way to piggyback on a practice in your organization.

Several procedures or hurdles are required for the introduction of your new idea but you're looking for an easier way.

Piggyback the new idea on a well-accepted practice in the organization.

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Champion Skeptic

Ask for Help from strong opinion leaders, who are skeptical of your new idea, to play the role of "official skeptic." Use their comments to improve your effort, even if you don't change their minds.

Some of the resistors to the new idea are strong opinion leaders in your organization.

Ask for help from a skeptical opinion leader to play the role of "official skeptic" or "official realist."

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Figure 15.1. **Examples of strategy cards from Fearless Journey**.

For the remote variant you need a virtual whiteboard. Sabina Lammert has implemented the game as a Miro board, as can be seen in Figure 10.2.
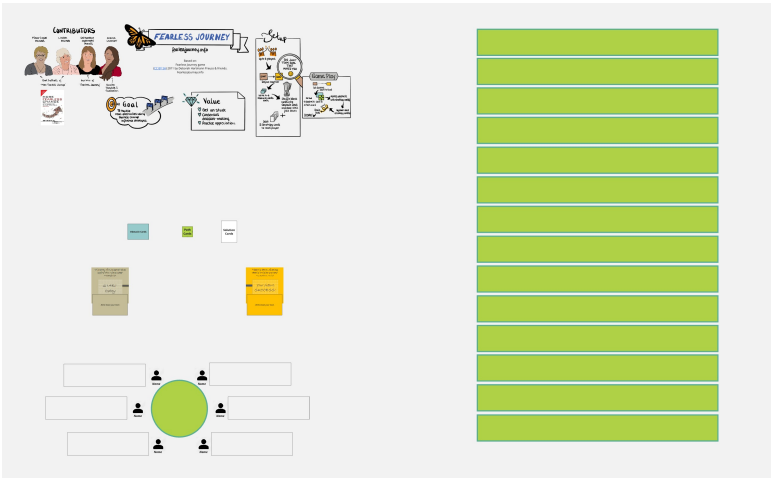
Figure 15.2. **Remote version of Fearless Journey.**

Preparation

Set up a table for the game. Place the start and finish about 40 cm apart.

Shuffle all the journey cards and place them upside down in a pile.

On top of the obstacle pile, place 20 blank index cards that the players will fill in immediately.

Shuffle the strategy pile well and place it on the table as well. Figure 10.1 shows the approximate layout of the game area with the individual piles.
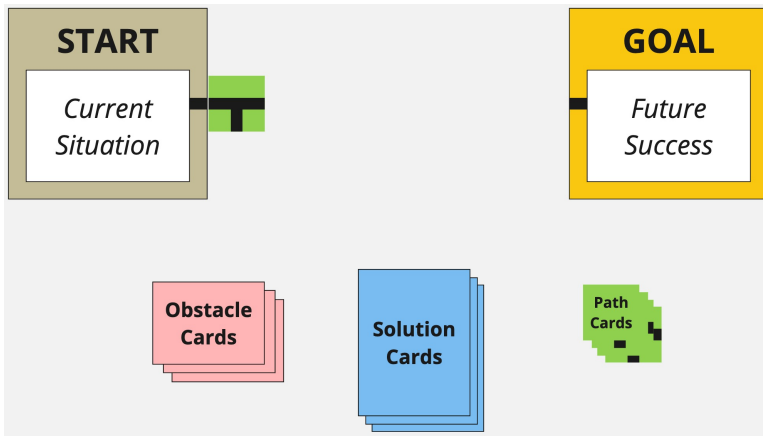
Figure 15.3. Fearless Journey: Setting up the cards on the table.

Procedure and Facilitation

In this game the participants find concrete ways to overcome the obstacles in their real work situation. They use cards to create a path from their current situation to their desired goal. Along the way, they encounter obstacles for which they find and discuss solution strategies.

Identify the goal and the obstacles:

1. Set the goal: The team agrees on the success (a big goal) and the current starting point and writes on an index card for each. Place the start and goal cards about 40 cm apart.
2. Pile of obstacles: On 20 index cards each, the participants write down a concrete obstacle from their daily work that could block the way to the goal. Shuffle the 20 blank and written obstacle cards and place the pile face down on the table.
3. Strategy deck: Give each player five strategy cards and place the remaining cards face down on the table.

"Please familiarize yourselves with the strategies you have in your hand. I'll give you a few minutes to do this." After three to five minutes, check to see how far along the players are. Answer questions about the strategies as needed. It is important at this point that individuals are familiar with their own strategies. A discussion as a whole team will occur later when one of these strategies is "brought into play" as a possible solution.

Create a path from beginning to end:

1. The first person draws a path tile and places it on an unblocked path (i.e., a path tile whose outgoing path is not blocked by an obstacle tile).

2. Then he draws an obstacle card from the deck. If it is empty, her turn ends. If she describes an obstacle, she reads it aloud and places it next to the path card she just placed. That path is blocked until the obstacle is removed.

3. Now the team can use one or more of the strategies described on the Strategy cards to remove an obstacle: each person can suggest a strategy described on their own card. The team discusses and decides. If there is no veto, the obstacle and strategy card are discarded.

4. The active player thanks everyone who has contributed a strategy with one of her strategy cards. She then passes the cards from her hand to the other contributors. She refills her deck with strategy cards.

5. "Again, take a moment to read the new strategy cards." The game continues to the left of the current player.

6. The game ends when the starting point and destination are connected by way cards, or when the team has a clear idea of how to overcome the first obstacles. At this point, calmly ask the team, "Are the strategies you've identified so far enough? Do you need more to reach the big goal with confidence?" Sometimes less is more. It doesn't help to have a list of 20 strategies on the team's to-do list, none of which will be

implemented–rather, focus on a few or even just one strategy and actually implement it, and then quickly play the next round of the Fearless Journey with the team to address what may be entirely new challenges.

7. At the end of the game, reflect on the game and the lessons learned. Participants look at the game board: A path has been created from the initial state to or towards the goal. Along the way, obstacles have been overcome through possible strategies.

Notes and Hints

- Goal: "Aim for a goal that puts a smile on people's faces. Not 50% defect reduction, but: Customers love our product!"
- Before the first round: "Start with a 'T-piece' so you don't get blocked on the first round."
- Do people ask questions or find fault with the lack of rules? Respond with, "Ask yourself what would happen in real life." Let them think for themselves and come up with creative solutions.
- Back to reality: "Use the ideas from the game to determine actions and plan!"

Debriefing Tips

- "What was fun about the game?"
- "What was difficult? What was easy? What surprised you?"
- "How difficult was it to reach consensus?"
- "Who played what role in the decision-making process?"
- "Where do you see differences from the usual decision-making process?"
- "What will change in your work?"
- "How do you feel about the goal?"

Purposes in Detail

Idea Generation

Through the many patterns of change, this game helps participants generate ideas to remove their own obstacles.

Identify and Overcome Impediments

At the beginning of this game, participants must write down their obstacles. Throughout the game, participants will identify barriers to a change pattern in their own organization. Overcoming these barriers is the goal of the entire game.

Reflection

By identifying obstacles and finding appropriate countermeasures, this game ensures that participants reflect on their current situation.

Source

All materials and more information about the game can be found at *https://fearlessjourney.info/*.

The game was developed at Play4Agile 2011 by Deborah Hartmann-Preuss and Ilja Preuss [HARTMANN-PREUSS]. It is based on the Fearless Change Pattern by Mary Lynn Manns and Linda Rising from their book of the same name [MANNS-RISING].

The Miro template for the remote version was kindly created by Sabina Lammert [LAMMERT].

Story Telling in Circles

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Rhetoric - The Public Speaking Game

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Shower of Appreciation

Type
   Building trust through mutual appreciation
Purposes
   Communication, Trust Building
Medium
   Remote and in-person
Level
   Relatively easy
Group Size
   Playable with any number of groups of 3 people each
Duration
   10 minutes

Learning Objectives

In this game, participants learn how nice it is and how it feels to receive positive feedback and recognition.

Materials Needed

You will need a chair for each person.

For the remote version, you will need a conferencing tool that allows you to send three people at a time into their own breakout rooms.

Preparation

Prepare a room where participants can easily move their chairs. There should be no tables or other furniture.

Procedure and Facilitation

In this exercise, participants in small groups will take turns giving positive feedback to a single person without that person speaking.

"This exercise will be done in groups of three. Please come together in groups of three. You should get along well. Ideally, you have worked together before."

"Take your chairs and arrange them so that two people can sit facing each other and talk behind the back of the third person.

The chair arrangement should look something like the one in .
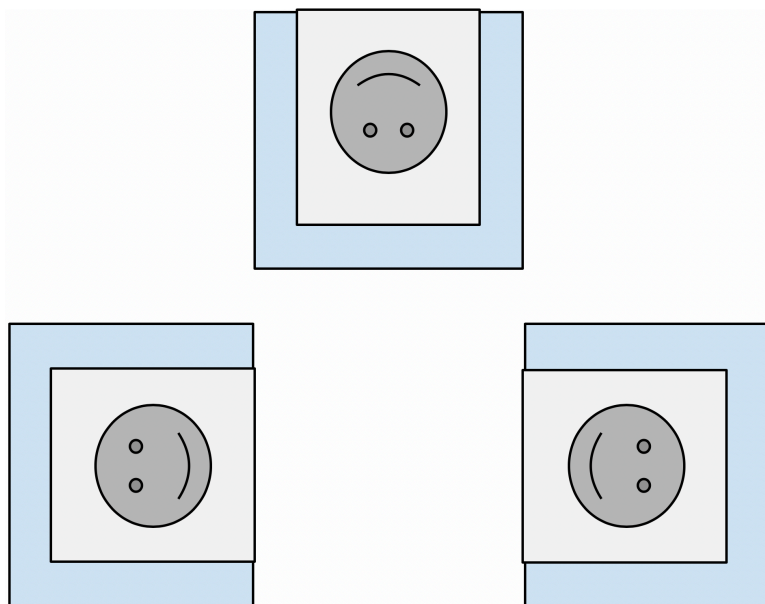
Figure 15.4. **Arrangement and position of the three participants in their chairs**.

"The two people sitting opposite each other now have one minute to talk about the third person behind their backs. The following two rules apply

1. only positive things can be said.
2. nothing said may be taken back or lose meaning by anything said later.

Now please sit down. Are you ready? Let's go!"

Set the timer for one minute, feel free to set it for two minutes if the participants know each other well.

Repeat this two more times so that all three people in the groups receive the Shower of Appreciation once.

In the remote version, simply send the groups to their breakout rooms: "Please do the Shower of Appreciation three times in your

breakout rooms. When you're done, come back to the main room. We'll see you back here in no more than six minutes.

Follow-up

Put the chairs and furniture back in order.

Pitfalls

This game has it all, because even today it is not common for many employees in traditional organizations to receive recognition and appreciation in such a direct way, or to express it themselves in such a way. This can cause some people to feel very uncomfortable and not want to participate in the exercise at all. Respect this and take it as valuable information for the further coaching process that may lie ahead with these people.

It can also happen that some people find it extremely difficult to say even positive things to others. Marc once had a participant who expressed vehemently that he didn't even know what to say. Instead, he kept repeating, "Well, I really can't say anything negative about Alex. He found it incredibly difficult to say anything positive about his teammate. He justified this by saying that he couldn't think of anything bad to say. True to the Swabian motto: "Not being scolded is praise enough."[1] In such cases, try to get the person to think of a small positive aspect. Perhaps she can think of one small positive thing she has noticed about the team member lately.

Debriefing Tips

The experience is usually so good for the individual that there is no need to debrief. You can conclude by saying, "Just take this good feeling and enjoy it."

---

[1] In the original Swabian language: "Ned gschimpft isch gnuag g'lobt."

Purposes in Detail

Communication
> In this exercise, participants learn to give positive feedback to another person and to accept positive feedback without their own limitations.

Trust Building
> Groups of three build deeper trust through this exercise. They can use it over and over again to maintain and build trust.

Source

Marc first experienced this exercise at XP Days 2010 in Hamburg in a session by Deborah Hartmann-Preuß and Ralph Miarka. The oldest source is a blog post by Ralph at the time [MIARKA].

SIN Obelisk

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Team 3 and ToiletTrolls

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Side Switcher

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Coop Maze

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Magic Maze

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Catch Shoe

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11: Technical Skills - t3ch skillz 4 n3rds

"Believing oneself to be perfect is often the sign of a delusional mind."

*— Lieutenant Commander Data, USS Enterprise NCC 1701-D

All of the original lightweight methodologies that led to the "Agile" catchphrase in 2001 were aimed at developing and delivering a well-functioning system for real users. This Technical Skills chapter focuses on development and programming and provides learning experiences for a range of agile development practices.

For development teams, the topics of continuous integration, refactoring, technical excellence, and, most importantly, understanding technical debt are essential. Without modern, collaborative development practices in the team, all other agile methods are just nice extras. At the core, it's always about building high quality products–and that's what teams do with their technical skills.

Coding Dojo

Type
> A training space for development teams to learn new practices and deepen existing ones.

Purposes
> Communication, Refactoring (Continuous), Team-Building, Teamwork, Technical Excellence, Technical Debt, Trust Building

Medium
>   Remote and in-person

Level
>   Easy

Group Size
>   Any

Duration
>   Any

Learning Objectives

Collaborative training and learning of development techniques, languages, frameworks, tools.

A coding dojo is a training space for development teams. It is a safe environment where new practices can be tried and learned, and existing practices can be discussed and deepened within the team. The term "dojo" comes from the Japanese and means "the place where the way is practiced". In the dojo, training is done with so-called "katas". A kata is a fixed program task to be solved in the dojo. The term "kata" comes from the Japanese and means "form" or "posture".

The goal of a coding dojo is to solidify the team's shared understanding of software design and code quality. Good teams hold a coding dojo every week, or at least every other week, for one to two hours.

Materials Needed

- List of coding katas
- Development environments for all participants
- In-person: Projector or way to show screen content to all participants
- Remote: Video conferencing

Preparation

Think with your team about what techniques or aspects of coding you would like to look at in the next dojo. This can be very general, and you will discuss different approaches to a selected kata. Or you may want to apply specific development principles and practices to a kata, such as mocks, refactoring, SOLID, TDD, pairing, etc.

Use the team's experience and thirst for knowledge to fill a backlog of topics for upcoming dojos. You can find possible katas on various sites on the Internet. Just search for "coding kata" and off you go. The most popular are probably Fizz-Buzz, Gilded Rose, and Bowling.

Procedure and Facilitation

As a team, choose a kata to be solved by the entire group in Test-Driven Development. (Yes, we explicitly want to do this with TDD).

For a start, the classic beginner kata "FizzBuzz" is a good choice:

Kata "FizzBuzz"

Write a function that prints out all numbers from 1 to 100. However, some numbers are replaced by the following rules:

- If the number is divisible by 3, output "Fizz".
- If the number is divisible by 5, output "Buzz".
- If the number is divisible by both 3 and 5, output "FizzBuzz".

So the correct output is as follows:

```
1      1
2      2
3      Fizz
4      4
5      Buzz
6      Fizz
7      7
8      8
9      Fizz
10     Buzz
11     11
12     Fizz
13     13
14     14
15     FizzBuzz
16     16
17     ...
```

Present the kata to the team, or better yet, have someone from the team present the kata. Questions of algorithmic and content nature can still be answered briefly. Further solution finding is now up to the participants.

People can now work in pairs, or in threes if someone is left over. The group work now starts with TDD (Test-Driven Development).

Set a timer for 5, 10 or 15 minutes, depending on the complexity of the kata. After the timebox, ask the group if they would like to add another short timebox.

Afterwards, review and reflect on the solutions found, especially the different ways of solving the problem. Especially when a team has some Dojo experience behind them, new insights and remarkable details emerge. There are also always outliers (in the solutions) that are worth discussing.

Notes and Hints

Make sure that aspects like TDD, test-first, pair programming, Ensemble Programming, and frequent driver changes are enabled and taking place. If you are unfamiliar with these terms, use coding dojos to practice the relevant aspects with your team. Read books and blogs on the subject, educate yourself. After all, you want to be able to help your teams with the technical skills as well.

Have groups work on a "come green, go green" basis: Only change keyboards in pairs or in ensemble programming when all tests are green. We want to find and leave only working software as we develop.

The whole exercise should also whet the team's appetite for Ensemble Programming as a real working mode (see Section 11.2). Ensemble programming is the consistent application of coding dojo principles to work on real, productive code.

With more experienced teams, you can build in difficulty:

- An unfamiliar keyboard layout (the first session on an Apple Mac will not be easy for Windows users).
- A requirement to develop a solution using recursion.
- Something extreme like not having an IDE. So programming is done only in the simplest text editors like Notepad (and without ++) or nano. Dennis' friends Ilker Cetinkaya and Andreas Lengauer once took it to the next level and programmed as a pair exclusively with cell phones, as can be seen in Figure 11.1. One built the code and tests in jsfiddle (*https://jsfiddle.net*) and the other looked up the syntax in parallel. Awesome!

Figure 16.1. Ilker and Andreas doing pair programming with cell phones.

Pitfalls

Teams without Dojo experience tend to address and work on development issues in their real code. "Surely we can make better use of our time if we get real results right away"–we hear this all the time. Unfortunately, the answer is a resounding "no". A coding dojo is a training mode; it's not open-heart surgery.

If the team wants to write productive code, the next sensible practice is called *Ensemble Programming*.

Debriefing Tips

At the end of the coding dojo, ask for explicit, concrete insights and ways of working that the team wants to take back and integrate into their daily lives.

Purposes in Detail

Communication
In this type of collaboration, the team needs to communicate constantly. Good communication becomes necessary and can even be tested by the team in its retrospectives.

Refactoring (Continuous)
Refactoring as part of agile development practices will always be a part of coding dojos.

Team-Building
In this format, the team works together properly and "seriously". This brings the team closer together.

Teamwork
The team learns to discuss and solve problems together in this format.

Technical Excellence
The purpose of this format is to build the technical excellence of the team. Other aspects of agile development practices will be brought into the coding dojos for the team to try out and deepen.

Technical Debt
A coding dojo is the ideal place for the team to talk about technical debt. A common understanding can be built and avoidance strategies can be embedded within the team.

Trust Building
Through tangible team collaboration, a coding dojo often leads to deeper trust within the team.

Source

No one in the international agile scene can really remember who came up with the idea of coding dojos. Some tend to credit Corey Haines. Robert "Uncle Bob" Martin remembers a session at XP 2005 by Laurent Bossavit and Emmanuel Gaillot that introduced

the concept of the coding dojo. And still others think that Dave Thomas ("Pragmatic Dave") had something to do with it as the inventor of the Kata. As you can see, there are a lot of well-known contributors to this topic. Finally, Emily Bache was able to confirm that Laurent and Emmanuel invented coding dojos in 2005. This is commonly referred to as the Paris school of coding dojos. The Munich School goes back to Pete Sacchet, Philipp Schiling and Ilker Cetinkaya. Together with them, Dennis had previously organized the corresponding meetup in Munich.

For a more in-depth look at coding dojos, we recommend Emily's book "The Coding Dojo Handbook". [BACHE].

Ensemble Programming / Mob Programming

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Learning Objectives

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Materials Needed

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Dice of Debt

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Technical Debt Game

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Continuous Integration with LEGO®

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The T-Shaped House

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Fun, Nonsense and Gravy

12: Team-Building

"The better you know the rules of the game, the more fun it is to get around them."

*— Werner Mitsch (1936–2009), German aphorist.

After one (or more) days of intensive training, we often get together with the participants for a drink in the evening. With the right group and enough energy, the games in this category can be a nice ending. They have nothing to add in terms of content or method (unless you want to debrief them properly), and they clear the head for a good night's sleep and a fresh new day.

You can also use these games for team building activities, as they all have a high communication aspect.

AmongUs

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Werewolves

Type
    Social Deduction Game
Purposes
    Fun, Team-Building, Trust Building
Medium
    Remote and in-person
Level
    You should have experienced the game a few times as a teammate to be able to assess the dynamics that typically emerge
Group Size
    At least 8 people plus a moderating storyteller
Duration
    Approximately 30 minutes

Materials Needed

A set of werewolf cards [WEREWOLF], available for purchase at your local game store. Alternatively, you can make the cards yourself. Very pragmatically, even index cards or sticky notes work, carefully written on so that the writing is not legible from the back.

Another variant is to write on coffee cups with a whiteboard marker on the inside edge with the roles.

The basic game includes the following cards:

- 13 Villagers: these are the normal people in the village who do a decent job and are otherwise not guilty of anything.

- 4 Werewolves: These disguise themselves as normal people, but are nocturnal and pursue evil plans by killing a player every night.

Special roles, all of which are villagers:

- 1 Seer: She can find out a person's true identity each night.
- 1 Thief: He may look at two other cards at the beginning of the game and decide if he wants to take one of them as a new role.
- 1 Cupid: He only wakes up on the first night and determines two people who are paired up from then on. If one of these persons dies, the other one immediately leaves with him.
- 1 Hunter: If the hunter dies, he shoots with his rifle at another person, who also perishes.
- 1 Witch: She wakes up at night after the werewolves and can save the victim of the werewolves with her healing potion as well as use her poison potion to kill a person.
- 1 Girl: She may blink secretly at night to find out about the werewolves.

Additional duty role:

- 1 Mayor: He is an additional role that takes one of the people. His vote counts double in case of a tie, to avoid a tie in the votes.

Preparation

The participants should sit in a circle of chairs in such a way that there is still enough space for you, as the game leader, to go completely around the circle. Caution! Do not wear squeaky shoes.

Depending on the number of players, put together a set of cards consisting of villagers and the corresponding number of were-wolves. Individual villager cards can be replaced by special roles to give the game a different dynamic. There should always be at least one special role, and depending on the experience of the other players, there may be more.

If you are playing with untainted werewolf newcomers, it is advantageous for the first round to dispense with the special roles. The players are already challenged enough with werewolves, villagers and the game dynamics.

contains the distribution of the roles depending on the group size.

The distribution of the individual roles

Group size	Werewolves	Villagers
8	2	5
9	2	6
10	2	7
11	2	8
12	3	8
13	3	9
14	3	10
15	3	11
16	3	12
17	3	13
18	4	13

Now distribute the cards face down to the other players. A popular way to do this is to simply place the cards in the center and each person takes one.

Everyone briefly familiarizes themselves with their role and places their card face down under their chair. Each person now knows if

they are a villager, werewolf, or have a special role.

As the moderator, you don't know who has which role at this point. However, you will find out in the first night that follows. Remember well which persons have the role of werewolves! Most of the other things will follow by themselves.

Procedure and Facilitation

In this game, participants sit in a circle of chairs and play either a villager or a werewolf. The goal of these two factions is to wipe out the other faction. By questioning and suspecting, they hopefully get closer to the solution before their own end.

Choice of Mayor

The role of the mayor is an additional role that one of the characters takes publicly in parallel with their other, secret role. At the start of the game, you ask the group, "Who would like to apply for the role of Mayor?" Those interested are then allowed to briefly state for what good reasons and merits they should be chosen. After the applications, all the players point to their choice with their index finger. The person with the most votes is assigned the role and places the mayor's card on the floor in front of them for all to see.

Should the captain be transferred to the eternal hunting grounds during the game, he may freely decide to whom he will hand over this role after his demise.

Night Phase

Walk slowly and comfortably around the circle of participants.

"We have had another busy day in our village and are now tired. The sun is setting and all the residents are closing their eyes, no talking."

Walk a few steps before the werewolves are to awaken, "It is midnight, the werewolves are waking up." The werewolves may open their eyes. On the first night, give them a short time to find each other with glances. "The werewolves will now choose who they would like to eat." Using looks and sign language, the werewolves will now communicate and agree on one person. When you are sure that you too have grasped the correct person, you will indicate this to the werewolves with a nod. "The werewolves go back to sleep and close their eyes."

Depending on the selection of special roles, you now call them up one after the other for their actions. In the simple variant, people like to play with just the Seer and/or the Witch.

"The Seer awakens." Pause for a moment. "The Seer points to a person, she wants to know if they are villager or werewolf." The seer must now choose someone and indicate them to you, as quietly as possible, so as not to give herself away as a seer. Once you understand which person the seer has chosen, pantomime indicating whether the person is a villager (sleeping with cheek on hands) or a werewolf (nasty grimace and claws showing). "The seer continues to sleep." The seer now has knowledge advantage over the other players and can tip the scales later when identifying werewolves. Of course, she should proceed with caution and not reveal herself as a seer to the werewolves too soon.

Day Phase

"It is getting light. The rooster crows, and the village wakes up. Everyone awakens and looks forward to a glorious new day. Except for <Name>, who unfortunately has been killed by the werewolves."

The deceased person then turns over his or her card so that all can see his or her role, and drops out of the round. Dead persons are no longer allowed to participate in discussions or voting. It is established that they turn their chair around and sit down with the back between their legs.

Figure 18.1. A round of werewolves with already 'deceased' people who have turned the back of their chair around.

A very exciting variation on this is to not reveal the identity of the deceased. As the game master, you must then also call up all the special roles that have already died at night and pretend that they are still active.

Now give the round a short time (two or three minutes at most) to discuss what happened during the night and who could be a werewolf and therefore must be killed. After that, you ask exactly this question: "It's time, you have to decide. Everyone points to the center with their index finger. On 3, everyone points to the person to be killed. 1, 2, 3."

Each person now counts the fingers pointing at them. The person with the most votes is killed, turns over their card and is eliminated from the round. In the event of a tie, the mayor comes in and his vote counts double.

"And so another day slowly comes to an end." The next night phase begins, everyone closes their eyes.

End of the game

The game ends when either all villagers or all werewolves are dead.

After briefly asking who would like to play another round and getting fresh drinks, the next game can start. At the Agile Coach Camps in Rückersbach, this slightly nerdy pastime usually ends between 2 and 3 in the morning.

Remote Facilitation

The remote variant of this game has been moderated by Markus Wissekal since March 2020. (Presumably there are also many more moderators since the early pandemic start. However, Markus pulled us right in because of our personal closeness. So in this sense: Many thanks to all moderators who put their heart and soul into helping people to kill each other in their villages). Since then, a lot has developed and changed. The following description is as of May 2022.

Basically, you need a video conference for the game, and all participants need a working audio and video setup.

You can find a concept board explaining all roles and further information at [WEREWOLVES-ONLINE].

Role distribution

For the role distribution, each person is assigned a unique sequential number. Example: Arya, Brandon, Catelyn, Daenerys, Eddard, Margaery, Sansa and Tyrion are playing. They will receive the following numbers from you via a private chat message:

- 4 Arya

- 5 Brandon
- 1 Catelyn
- 6 Daenerys
- 3 Eddard
- 8 Margaery
- 2 Sansa
- 7 Tyrion

These numbers remain secret and are needed for the drawing of the roles.

You can easily distribute the roles using a tool like "Wheel of Names" (*https://wheelofnames.com/*). If there are 8 participants, there are 2 werewolves, and we pick 2 special roles, for example. Figure 12.1 shows the starting formation of a "Wheel of Names" for eight people.

Figure 18.2. **Wheel of Names for Werewolves Online**.

You show the Wheel of Fortune via screen sharing, spin it saying "The person with the number 1 is an ..." and announce the roll. The roll then automatically disappears from the wheel, and you spin the rolls for all subsequent numbers.

New role: Companion

The new role of Companion has been introduced. This person can decide not to spend the night at his own house the next night, but at the house of another person. If this other person is a human, they both know they are humans. If the other person is a wolf, then he has a good breakfast. So trust is immediately established between two people. In the Companion's house, no one can be killed by the wolves. However, in the other person's house, they both die at

once.

Silent night

Nights are very different online: all microphones and cameras go off. People communicate in other ways at night via private chats, Slack, Google Docs, WhatsApp, or whatever is available and convenient. This is true especially for you. For example, you ask the seer via chat, whose role she wants to know and send her the answer. The werewolves chat in their own channel, pick the next person to eat, and tell you.

When the night is over, the consequent "hard" timebox comes: If no message has come from the wolves by then, no one dies either. For this it is extremely helpful, if you make the currently running timer visible to everyone via screen sharing. A hard timebox is necessary, because the werewolves have to come to a decision. Otherwise you will quickly find that endless time is needed for inconclusive discussions. After all, the game is supposed to be moving forward.

Elections and Mayors

Choosing the person to kill is done by counting down "3, 2, 1" in front of you and sending the chosen name off at "0".

As you may know, the chosen mayor is very fond of having his life taken right on the first night. To break this pattern, tell the following story at the beginning: "The first night is approaching, a great feast is coming to an end, but the people of the village are so tired that they cannot clean up. That's why the dutiful mayor stays at the festival site, spends the night cleaning up, and can't be eaten by the werewolves."

Chat in Heaven

All the deceased meet in a common Google document, where they can puzzle together who the werewolves are. This often results in

very amusing conversations, as the following excerpt shows:

```
1     Kirsten: Yes, Veit is always a very bad one.
2     Kirsten: Now he tries to distract with a lot of factu\
3  al content ;-)
4     Uli: He had held back very much at the beginning.
5     Kirsten: Michael isn't.
6     Kirsten: Or?
7     Kirsten: Hopefully he is not only crispy, but also ta\
8  sty.
9     Michael C: But so what!
10    Kirsten: har har
11    Uli: Welcome to heaven, Michael.
12    Kirsten: When villagers kill villagers, it's bad.
13    I don't think they were villagers ... ;-)
14    Kirsten: Not only, that's true.
15    Kirsten: I'll stick with Silvia and I still believe V\
16 eit too.
17    Michael: Michaela, I would have thought you were a we\
18 rewolf.
19    Kirsten: When mourned always sounds a little suspicio\
20 us to me, ohoh.
21    Uli: I guess Dennis is due now :)
```

Follow-up

Have all participants return the room to a usable state.

Notes and Hints

For a successful moderation, you have to read the official instructions carefully. In particular, familiarize yourself with all the special roles so you know exactly which role will be called upon when and what their abilities are.

Debriefing Tips

After some rounds, some players feel the need to talk about what they have experienced. This is where controversial discussions can certainly arise. Just let it go, we have finally arrived at the fun part of this book.

Purposes in Detail

Fun This game is a lot of fun and is always fun to play.
Team-Building
> by experiencing the game together, participants grow closer.

Trust Building
> Paradoxically, this game increases trust among the participants, even though they mostly distrust each other during the game.

Source

The game has been part of the standard repertoire of the international agile community for many years. You can find everything else in the small box of [WEREWOLF].

We would like to express special thanks to the three werewolf game leaders Katrin Bretscher, Jasmine Zahno and Markus Wissekal, who always put themselves into this role with the greatest joy and passion.

PowerPoint Karaoke

Type
> Practice presenting in front of a group

Purposes
> Presenting, Fun

Medium
> Remote and in-person

Level
> Easy

Group Size
> At least 4, no upper limit

Duration
> unlimited playable

Learning Objectives

In "PowerPoint Karaoke", participants practice giving spontaneous presentations on previously unknown topics. It trains creativity and spontaneity. And if everyone hasn't laughed themselves to death, they play the next round.

Materials Needed

- projector
- Laptop with lots of presentations
- pens/markers
- slips of paper (printer paper cut in half twice)
- Box for the collected slips of paper
- Stopwatch/timer

For the remote version, you will need a video conferencing tool in addition to the presentations and a timer.

Preparation

Connect the laptop to the projector and prepare presentations so that they can be called up quickly.

Search for suitable presentations on *slideshare.net* or other sites. These should contain at least six slides. Generally, images work

better than text. If text slides, then a lot of text is often better than little text. Surprises in a presentation are also always good, e.g. pictures that don't fit the red thread of the presentation at all.

Markus Wissekal provides his collection of suitable presentations, which has grown over the years, on the site *pptkaraoke.club*.

It can also be very funny if you get hold of presentations created by participants themselves. They should not know about it so that the surprise (and usually the laughter) is even bigger.

Provide notes and pens for the participants.

Procedure and Facilitation

Ask the participants to grab a piece of paper and a pencil and write down a funny, absurd or whatever topic they want to talk about on each piece of paper. The slips of paper should then be folded once or twice and thrown into the box provided. Give it a good stir, and you're done.

Now it's time for the first volunteer. This person takes a piece of paper from the box and now has two minutes to give a presentation on the topic found on the piece of paper. During the two minutes, a random presentation runs on the beamer. Every 20 seconds the slide changes, so that a total of six slides can be seen per presentation.

The presenters are completely free in their presentation. Whether they name the topic right at the beginning, announce it during the presentation or only at the very end is up to them.

The joke of the whole thing is to combine the topic of the note with the topic of the slides and, in some way, to create a "coherent" presentation out of it. This combination very often creates funny and absurd moments. And it happens regularly that people lie on the floor laughing and have to calm down for minutes afterward before it can continue.

As a variation, two people are welcome to give a presentation together.

There are no limits to creativity and especially humor in this game.

At the Agile Coach Camp 2022, due to technical problems, we were once again, able to run a variant that was originally created as a remote variant: As you can see in Figure 12.1, six volunteers line up, each armed with a large sheet of paper. Each of these people writes a word clearly visible and large on their sheet, but still keeps it to themselves. At a signal from the moderator, one person at a time shows their word to the presenter (and the audience). Otherwise, the already known rules apply. As always, this was extremely funny, and words like "Chuck Norris" or "Washing Nuts" in the appropriate context caused considerable laughter for the presenter and the entire audience.

Figure 18.3. PowerPoint Karaoke with no technology, just a piece of paper and pencil.

Remote Facilitation

There are several ways to do this activity online.

- The classic variant described above can be implemented very easily in a video conference. A small drawback, depending on the tool used, is that the person presenting cannot be seen at the same time as the presentation. Or one of them large, the other only small. Just try out here what possibilities the video conferencing tool offers.

- A very cool possibility of a remote implementation is provided by Markus Wissekal at *https://pptkaraoke.club/* in the form of self-running video backgrounds for Zoom. For this, however, the participants must be fit in Zoom operation, since the video backgrounds must be downloaded by the people, inserted in Zoom as background video and then still started at the right time. This may be a bit too complicated for PowerPoint karaoke beginners.

- For the topic selection, the participants can describe and collect their own slips of paper at their place. You, as the moderator, now randomly select a person who holds one of their slips of paper visibly into the camera. The presenting person may then also thank this person directly for the excellent and significant topic.

- Alternatively, the participants can send you their topics as a private message. You collect these and randomly select a topic for the next person presenting.

- Basically, it is important that people disable the virtual background in the camera settings. Otherwise, when holding up notes, there will always be fragments that make the whole thing hard to read.

- You can also work without presentations at all and just let the participants spin stories. This is basically more along the lines of Story Telling in Circles or Rhetoric - The Public Speaking Game. For example, one person starts with a given topic, and

people take turns telling the story with the topics on their slips of paper.

- Or you can work with a narrator who is shown words on slips of paper by the others, who hold them up to the camera one by one.

As you can see, there's a lot to experiment with here. Just go for it. Find out which way is the funniest for you and the people present at the moment. And the nice thing about it: If something doesn't work, then you just do something else.

Notes and Hints

This description corresponds to the variant of PowerPoint Karaoke that has been played at the Agile Coach Camp Germany every year for many years.

Markus Wissekal, who always likes to provide the tech there, adds this note: "I use a little extension called Karabiner to match/convert the keys of my Logitech clicker (the presentation remote) to those of Slideshare and those of Chrome for full screen."

Be sure to place the timer visible to the person presenting. This helps experienced speakers with their timing–and all other participants as well.

Pitfalls

Depending on the culture and group of participants, it can be awkward or embarrassing if political, salacious, or otherwise inappropriate topics are noted on the slips of paper. If necessary, discuss this with the attendees in advance and explicitly point out that the person presenting can pass on a topic at any time.

In any case, we authors believe that it is the uncomfortable topics that bring the most fun to this game. Tears have been laughed for

minutes on topics that might have been taboo in a public space. "Penis! Hihihihi."

Debriefing Tips

If you want to give the whole exercise a more serious edge, participants get feedback and constructive criticism from the audience after their presentations. The aspects of pronunciation, posture, body language, etc. may be mentioned. The aim is that the participants' presentation techniques can be concretely improved through the exercise.

Purposes in Detail

Presenting
> The purpose of this game is to spontaneously present an unfamiliar topic with unfamiliar slides.

Fun This game provides unrestrained laughter among all participants. It doesn't get much better than this.

Source

You can find presentations of all kinds on *https://www.slideshare.net/* and similar sites. Especially suitable and tested presentations can be found on *https://pptkaraoke.club/* [WISSEKAL].

Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes

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Cards against Agility

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Follow-up

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Game Round

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Session A. Election of the government

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End of the game

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Appendix

13: References and Literature

"In play we betray whose brainchild we are."
— *Ovid (43 BC to 17 AD).*

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14: About the Authors

Marc Bless

Figure 21.1. Marc Bless

Marc embarked on his software development journey in 1984, a time when the digital realm was still in its nascent stages. By the 90s, he delved deep into the world of computer science, specializing in the intriguing domain of artificial intelligence. This was a testament to his forward-thinking approach, always staying ahead

of the curve.

As the new millennium approached, Marc was already immersing himself in Agile methodologies, having been an advocate since 1999. His expertise doesn't just lie in understanding Agile but in imparting its wisdom. He has been instrumental in coaching both decision-makers and implementers, guiding them through the labyrinth of Agile frameworks and the nuances of contemporary development practices.

Marc's credentials are a testament to his dedication and prowess in the field. He is not only a qualified Solution-Focused Coach but also holds certifications as a SAFe 6.0 SPC, Certified Enterprise Coach (CEC), and Certified Team Coach (CTC) from the esteemed Scrum Alliance.

The entrepreneurial spirit in Marc led him to establish agile-coach.de. With a staggering experience spanning over two decades as an Agile Coach, Scrum Master, and software developer, he has donned multiple hats - that of a leader, a lateral thinker, and an inquisitive questioner. His undying passion lies in the rapid and enduring enhancement of teams and organizations. For Marc, quality isn't just a metric; it's the cornerstone of success. He staunchly believes in its non-negotiable nature.

Marc's expertise isn't confined to a singular industry. While he has significant experience applying agile methods in the regulated realm of medical technology, his versatility shines through his extensive work across various sectors. Whether it's top-tier executives or grassroots teams, Marc possesses the unique ability to articulate agile transformation processes in a manner that resonates with all.

His commitment to the agile community is unwavering. As a regular speaker at international conferences, he shares insights on agile paradigms, further establishing his thought leadership. Marc's academic pursuits in General Computer Science are complemented by a slew of certifications, including Certified Scrum Professional

(CSP), Certified Scrum Master (CSP-SM), Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSP-PO), and Project Manager (IPMA).

In essence, Marc Bless is not just a professional; he's a visionary, an innovator, and an agile evangelist, dedicated to steering the digital world towards a more agile and efficient future.

Marc can be reached at *marc.bless@agilecoach.de.*

Dennis Wagner

Figure 21.2. Dennis Wagner

Dennis has been passionate about software development since he sold his first software product at the age of 17 – that was 30 years ago (yes, he's got plenty of experience). Over the years, he's worn various hats, including Architect, Team Lead, Developer, and Product Manager, successfully improving software development practices. Eventually, he transitioned into the roles of consultant and coach.

One of Dennis's most significant accomplishments is leveraging Agile methodologies to deliver tangible results. He's seen firsthand how Agile can significantly boost team productivity and outcomes – a North Star he's committed to helping others reach. Dennis firmly believes that everyone deserves a fulfilling work experience, just as he's been fortunate to have in his career.

Open-minded, outgoing, and a dedicated Agilist since his introduction to XP and Scrum many years ago, Dennis can hardly believe it's been almost two decades in this field alone.

In addition to his work with companies, Dennis actively participates in national and international conferences, organizing events, serving on program committees, giving talks, and conducting reviews. He's deeply involved in the Agile community, including the Scrum Alliance and its German-speaking chapter, the Kanban Community, and the Kanban University, as well as the Scaled Agile Framework. Dennis holds numerous certifications from these organizations, but more importantly, he brings extensive real-world experience to these areas.

Today, he serves as an end-to-end consultant, helping teams, leaders, and organizations discover and unlock their full potential. His expertise spans a wide range of topics, from cutting-edge concepts like #NoEstimates, Beyond Budgeting, Enterprise Services Planning, OKRs, and Strategy Development to classic methodologies like Scrum, Kanban, and Clean Code.

Dennis can be reached at *dennis.wagner@dwcg-consulting.de.*