

Scrum Master Program Announcement

I am excited to tell you about a revitalized Scrum Master program that I have developed since leaving the Scrum Alliance.

Over the last five years, I have worked with many organizations that have implemented Scrum. The ScrumMasters that I have found in these organizations often have different opinions about what Scrum is and isn't, much less how to use Scrum. For example, it is reported that Scrum constitutes 84% of all Agile usage, yet less than 50% of these Scrum users claim to use iterative, incremental practices.

I was surprised by this disparity, since Scrum is a very simple framework that I thought would be hard to misinterpret. Upon investigation, I discovered that even those who were Certified ScrumMasters from the ScrumAlliance had different beliefs about Scrum. I have tracked this back to several causes,

1. The trainers, even Certified Scrum Trainers, use widely varying training materials based on their individual interpretation of Scrum;
2. The trainers aren't regularly audited and assessed for consistency and accuracy;
3. The trainers are not required to take and pass any assessment; and,
4. There is no certification or assessment test that ensures that only those with adequate knowledge are called "certified."

The revitalized Scrum Master program is named the Professional Scrum Master program. With much thought and care, this program has been designed to:

1. Deliver uniform, high quality training through licensed trainers who use uniform, consistent courseware and are assessed regularly regarding their knowledge and skill in order to acquire and keep the trainer license;
2. To regularly meet with all trainers to create consistent upgrades to the courseware;
3. To provide assessments and certifications for Scrum Masters that are meaningful and appropriate;
4. To provide progressive levels of training, assessment, and certification; and,
5. To regularly monitor the quality of the trainers through course evaluations and assessment scores by their students, and through regular review of their courseware and courses.

The three levels of Professional Scrum Master are subprograms that include assessment, certification and achievement. All levels have specific bodies of knowledge. The latter two levels have unique courseware. These levels are:

1. **Beginner - Scrum** (level I): Assesses the knowledge of the Scrum process through almost 100 questions. A precise understanding of Scrum's roles, time-boxes, artifacts and rules are required to achieve certification. This information is documented in "Scrum" (also known as "Scrum Guide") as sustained by Jeff

Scrum Master Program Announcement

Sutherland and myself at Scrum.org. Training can come from any number of commercial courses, including those provided by Scrum Alliance, or from self-study.

The assessment test is currently available on Scrum.org.

2. **Intermediate - How to Use Scrum** (level II); Assesses the knowledge of how to use Scrum in various software development circumstances, such as emergent architecture when a product family architecture is employed. The questions include nuanced Scrum questions, case studies, and essays. The questions are formalized in a Professional Scrum Master II assessment and certification. Those certified will have demonstrated knowledge of how to apply Scrum in sophisticated software development circumstances. I have developed Professional Scrum Developer II courseware (also known as “Scrum In Depth”) that we will be licensing to qualified trainers, who will be continually assessed as described above.

Professional ScrumMaster II courses, assessment and certification will be available starting March 1, 2010, on Scrum.org.

3. **Advanced - Using Scrum to Optimize Value** (level III): Assesses the knowledge of how to use Scrum to maximize the benefits to the organization. Such sophisticated topics as change management, organizational structure, product management, return on investment, and total cost of ownership are covered. The assessment includes nuanced Scrum usage questions, case studies of scaling and cost optimization, and essays.

Professional ScrumMaster III courses, assessment and certification will be available in the fall of 2010 at Scrum.org.

The Professional Scrum Master (PSM) program is an innovative program for those responsible for implementing and using Scrum within their organization and projects - including executives, managers, Scrum Masters, architects, and development leads. The PSM program is from the founders of Scrum and is offered exclusively through Scrum.org.

We are motivated by our desire to improve our profession, so the quality of the products we build are better, our customers value us more, and we enjoy our work. We sincerely hope that this program further increases the value Scrum brings to the organizations and people who use it.

For more information on the Professional Scrum Master program, to avail yourself of the assessments, or to find a class in your area, please visit Scrum.org.

Ken Schwaber

