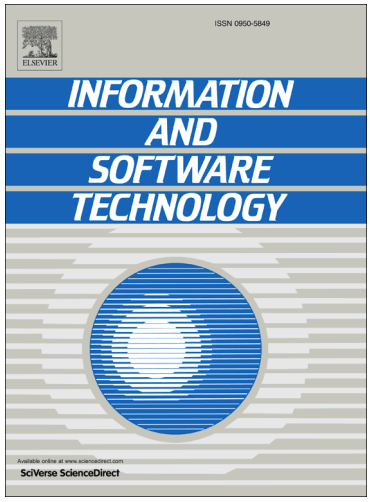

Towards a governance framework for chains of Scrum teams

Jan Vlietland, Hans van Vliet

PII: S0950-5849(14)00199-2
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.infsof.2014.08.008
Reference: INFSOF 5517

To appear in: *Information and Software Technology*

Received Date: 12 June 2014
Revised Date: 22 August 2014
Accepted Date: 29 August 2014

Please cite this article as: J. Vlietland, H.v. Vliet, Towards a governance framework for chains of Scrum teams, *Information and Software Technology* (2014), doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.infsof.2014.08.008

Towards a governance framework for chains of Scrum teams

Jan Vlietland[1], Hans van Vliet[2]

[1] Search4Solutions B.V., Professional Services, Utrecht, The Netherlands, j.vlietland@Search4Solutions.nl

[2] Department of Computer Science, VU University Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, J.C.van.Vliet@vu.nl

Abstract

Context: Large companies operating in the information intensive industries increasingly adopt Agile/Scrum to swiftly change IT functionality because of rapid changing business demands. IT functionality in large enterprises however is typically delivered by a portfolio of interdependent software applications involving a chain of Scrum teams. Usually, each application from the portfolio is allocated to a single Scrum team, which necessitates collaboration between the Scrum teams to jointly deliver functionality.

Objective: Identify the collaboration related issues in chains of Scrum teams.

Method: We used a qualitative approach with transcripted interviews from three case studies that were coded and analyzed to identify the issues.

Results: We identified six issues in chains of codependent Scrum teams; coordination, prioritization, alignment, automation, predictability and visibility. The synthesis of these issues with existing theory resulted in nine propositions. These nine propositions have been combined into a conceptual model.

Conclusion: We propose this conceptual model as a starting point for a governance framework to manage chains of Scrum teams that addresses the identified issues.

Keywords: Agile, Scrum, chain of Scrum teams, collaboration, coordination, priority, alignment, predictability, performance

1 Introduction

Large companies operating in the information intensive industries experience rapid changing business demands that require swift delivery of new IT functionality. To be able to deliver such IT functionality swiftly internal IT development centers increasingly adopt Agile methods. A common Agile method is Scrum which aims to empower IT development centers to deliver customer focused IT functionality in a fast pace.

IT functionality in large companies however is delivered by a portfolio of interdependent applications, not just a single application. Each application in the