Supplementary resource for the book *The Human Side of Agile.* More at www.TheHumanSideOfAgile.com

Help Your Team Self-Organize (SAMPLE)

This ATL has been with the team since its formation five weeks ago. He shares an open-plan office with the six full-timers, two of whom, Sandro and Sophia, are senior developers with previous Scrum experience. Two contractors, Karina and Corey (both Agile newbies) sit a minute's walk away because all team-area desks are taken. The team has been embracing Agile, participating actively throughout the life cycle. Each sprint starts with members choosing all their tasks for the sprint. They don't pair.

Strategy

- Increase sense of shared ownership by having each member sign up for just one task as they're ready to work on it.

- Get them talking about the work during the sprint, not just in meetings.

Actions

- In sprint planning, deter them from task signup. Explain why, and the alternative. Promise to help make choices.

- Notice (throughout the sprint) when people appear stuck, and find someone to help them.

- Ask our sponsor for help moving Corey and Karina to the team space. Explain that the way things are, the team is neither co-located nor distributed, which makes us less effective!

Keep in mind

- Sandro and Sophia are on vacation much of the sprint. This leaves the team short two senior folks and Scrum experience.

Evidence that the team is organizing themselves better this sprint

- Despite Sandro and Sophia's absence, nobody suggested delaying anything until their return.

- When Mannie got stuck refactoring some spaghetti code, he didn't give up – he called Kyle for help. (I should tell him not to ask me for permission first.) They had fun together and they finished it!

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