It's Not Just Standing Up: Patterns for Daily Stand-up Meetings

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Introduction

The daily stand-up meeting is simple to describe: the whole team meets every day for a quick status update. This short definition does not really tell you the subtle details that distinguish a good stand-up from a bad one.

Given the apparent simplicity of stand-ups, I was quite surprised the first time I saw one that wasn't working. It was immediately obvious to me what was wrong but I realised that it was not obvious to the team. I realised that I had never communicated the details that allowed me to diagnose and solve problems with stand-ups.

People who have experienced good stand-ups will generally know what can be done when things aren't working well. For novice stand-up attendees, when things go wrong, it is much less likely that they'll figure out what to do. One way to approach this issue is to claim that it's all a matter of tacit knowledge and novices just need to attend more well-run stand-ups. I believe, however, that it's much more likely that , given no assistance, novices will simply abandon the practice of daily stand-ups. This would be unfortunate since well-run stand-ups add significant value to projects.

I've written this paper as an attempt to communicate some of the previously tacit knowledge on the benefits and consequences of common practices for daily stand-ups. These patterns of stand-ups are intended to help new practitioners as well as remind experienced practitioners of what they might already know in their gut.

Motivation

Before examining activities or even goals, it is valuable to understand underlying motivation. Motivation leads to goals, which then lead to activities. Motivation acts like a general direction or theme to help guide us in deciding which goals are appropriate. For stand-ups, that general theme is self-organisation. This is not just because self-organisation may lead to better productivity but also, and perhaps more so, because it leads to a more humane, respectful, and mature work environment. Many of the problems that can arise in executing a good stand-up will derive from a mis-alignment with this underlying motivation of self-organisation.

Goals

Summarizing several papers and references ([Anderson, 2002]*, *[Beedle et al., 2000], [Cochango, 2006], [OrgPatternsStandUp]*, *[Rising, 2002]*, *[Rising and Janoff, 2002], [Wells, 1999]) daily stand-ups should achieve the following goals:

- share commitment
- communicate daily status, progress, and plans to the team and any observers
- identify obstacles so that the team can take steps to remove them
- set direction and focus
- build a team

Share commitment
Making daily commitments to each other as a team is the most important goal of daily stand-ups. Sharing commitment is more important than sharing progress or status. This is not to say that an observer will not have a sense of progress and status from the stand-up, but this is secondary to team members publicly committing to each other, and identifying obstacles that prevent them from meeting their commitments.

Communicate status

The focus of the meetings is on the technical progress in the architecture and the work plan. [OrgPatternsStandUp]

Communicating status is not much of a differentiator for stand-ups against any other kind of status meeting. The mechanism that stand-ups use for communicating the status **is** a differentiator. Updating status every day also ensures that the team reflects on what they're doing at least daily.

Identify obstacles

When one team member shares an obstacle in the Scrum meeting, the entire team's resources come together to bear on that problem. Because the team is working together toward a shared goal, every team member must cooperate to reach that goal. The entire team immediately owns any one individual's problems. [Rising and Janoff, 2000]

Raising and removing obstacles earlier allows the team to maintain its momentum. The stand-up itself is not intended to remove any particular obstacle but rather to provide a forum for people to identify obstacles so that other team members have the opportunity to help.

Set direction and focus

During the daily meetings, the Scrum master would call attention to backlog item priority. This was especially helpful for new team members, who might have gone off in another direction. [Rising and Janoff, 2000]

We want everyone to be moving in the same direction. The stand-up is used to continually remind the team what that direction is.

Build a team

More so than artificial "team-building" exercises, effective teams are built by regularly communicating, working, and helping each other. This is also strongly tied with team members helping each other with shared obstacles.

The team is aware of any particular member's problems because they hear about it every day (until the problem is solved). This environment encourages people to raise problems as a history develops of other people helping when problems are raised.

The Feel of an Effective Daily Stand-up

Technically, the meeting is a "daily stand-up" if everyone is standing up and the meeting is held every day. However, there is a different feel to a good stand-up that distinguishes it from an empty ritual.

An early description of daily stand-up meetings called them Daily Scrums [Beedle et al., 2000] with an intentional association with the rugby term. The energy level of a daily stand-up should perhaps not be quite as high as that of a rugby scrum but it should still feel energising. **Quickness** and **high energy** support the goal of setting focus. Long, low-energy meetings tend to distract and mute the day.

Good stand-ups will feel **supportive**. When people are knocked down every time they raise a problem, they will tend to stop raising problems. Beyond preventing removal of obstacles, a non-supportive stand-up works against team dynamics. The stand-up instead becomes a ritual that team members dread [LaPlante, 2003].

When things are going right, there isn't much direction or facilitation required for the stand-up. A good stand-up will feel **self-managed**.

Patterns

Having described motivation and goals, it is now necessary to look at specific activities. The subtlety of practices done well require both knowing what to do as well as understanding why it is done that way.

In this section, in-lined phrases in SMALL CAPITALS refer to pattern names while ***bold italic*** phrases refer to "smells". Smells are described in the section following this one.

ALL HANDS

People and representatives from various areas wish to know about and/or contribute to the status and progress of the project. Communicating status in multiple meetings and reports requires a lot of duplicate effort.

Therefore

Replace some or all of the meetings and reports with the daily stand-up. Anyone who is directly involved in or wants to know about the day-to-day operation of the project should attend the single daily stand-up meeting.

But

People not directly involved can disrupt the stand-up. This suggests that another forum would still be required for queries outside the scope of the stand-up.

Too many people in the meeting may cause disruption and/or cause people to be uncomfortable in sharing information. For very large stand-up groups, it is even more important to enforce ***PIGS AND CHICKENS*** and TAKE IT OFFLINE in order to ensure all contributers can provide their input in a timely fashion.

Not all forms of reporting will be, nor should be, covered by the stand-up format. For example, overall project progress would be better communicated with a Big Visible Chart [Jeffries, 2004] such as burn-down, burn-up, cumulative flow diagram, etc.

PIG AND CHICKENS

> *A chicken and a pig are together when the chicken says, "Let's start a restaurant!".*
> *The pig thinks it over and says, "What would we call this restaurant?".*
> *The chicken says, "Ham n' Eggs!".*
> *The pig says, "No thanks, I'd be committed, but you'd only be involved!".*
> *[Schwaber and Beedle, 2001]*

During a stand-up, interference by observers causes disruption in the communication within the team. Such interference may be in the form of interruptions or simply by participating and providing inappropriate information. If the interference is severe enough, the team members may not bother using the stand-up to communicate project issues and either create an alternate medium or not communicate at all.

Therefore

Institute a rule where only the "committed" participate and the "involved" are only allowed to observe. "Committed" means any people who contribute to the completion of the current iteration (i.e., developers, testers, immediate managers, etc.). In other words, people who can say something that directly affects the delivery of backlog items/features/stories. "Involved" are other people who may be interested in the status of the iteration but will not directly contribute to its completion. This could be other managers, sales staff, developers from other projects, etc. Any questions and issues that the "involved" have can be resolved after the meeting (TAKE IT OFFLINE) or communicated in a different medium.

But

Emphasizing too much distinction between the types of meeting attendees risks creating an adversarial relationship. It's not that observers are not allowed to communicate with the team; it is just that such communication is usually inappropriate during the daily stand-up.

SAME PLACE, SAME TIME

We want the team to have a sense of ownership of the stand-up. We also want interested parties to be able to drop by to observe a stand-up to avoid having to schedule yet another status meeting. This is difficult if any particular team member is allowed to force a delay or change of location of the stand-up.

Therefore
Run the daily stand-up at the SAME PLACE, SAME TIME. Do not wait for stragglers, including architects and managers. The meeting is for the whole team, not for any particular individual. This is especially important if you USE THE STAND-UP TO START THE DAY.

Some stricter teams may impose a "fine" for latecomers. I tend to be wary of any kind of punishment mechanism and prefer discussion.

But
SAME PLACE, SAME TIME is not intended to be blindly inflexible. The important thing is for the start time to be mostly consistent and rescheduling to be rare. If rescheduling is required often, it may be an indication that the start time should change. If a particular location is inconvenient for everyone to get to, it's probably an indication the location should change.

ATTEND BY PROXY
All Team members are required to attend. If for some reason a Team member can't attend in person, the absent member must either attend by telephone or by having another Team member report on their status. [Cochango, 2006]

If team members are seen to show up to the stand-up if they feel like it, there is a communication that commitment to the team is not important. However, there are situations when a team member cannot make the meeting for a very legitimate reason (*e.g.*, personal issues, production support problem, etc.). In these case, we still want a way for the member to express commitment in the stand-up.

Therefore
Team members that cannot attend the stand-up in person should find a way to ATTEND BY PROXY. This can be in the form of a representative, calling in by telephone, or sending an e-mail summary before hand. Virtual attendance is still better than non-attendance.

But
If team members regularly can't make the stand-up, this may be an indication that the stand-up is being held at a time or location that is not convenient for the whole team. It may also mean that the member is not actually part of the team, whether due to allocation to other responsibilities or problems with team affinity. Of course, attendance by proxy is also inferior to actually attending the meeting in person.

USE THE STAND-UP TO START THE DAY
The daily stand-up meeting provides focus and awareness of outstanding issues. If it occurs late in the day, this focus and awareness is wasted.

Therefore
USE THE STAND-UP TO START THE DAY.

With flexible work hours, not every team member will arrive at work at the same time. A common practice with "flex-time" is to use a set of core working hours. The start time should be at the start of these core working hours. Similarly, if team members need to arrive later for personal reasons (e.g., need to drop off kids at school), the start time should be set at a time so that everyone can attend.

But
There is usually a tendency not to work on any project-related tasks until the stand-up. If the ***Stand-up Meeting Starts the Day... Late***, this slack time may be significant. To some extent, this may simply be used as an opportunity to check e-mail, fill in timesheets, etc. but it may be worth investigating removing the stand-up as a "start of day" ritual by scheduling it later in the day.

Don't Use the Stand-up to Start the Day
The stand-up tends to serve as the ritual to set focus for the day, especially if you Use The Stand-up to Start the Day. Because of this, team members tend not to work on features until the stand-up. When the meeting is not actually held first thing, this tendency may have a significant impact on productivity.

Therefore
Don't Use the Stand-up to Start the Day. Schedule the daily stand-up meeting far enough into the day that it will not be psychologically associated as starting the day.

But
The stand-up is no longer a shared ritual to set team focus at the start the day. Depending on the team, this price may not be worth the apparent increase in efficiency.

When there are many project using stand-ups, it is possible that multiple stand-ups are occurring simultaneously. Observers interested in multiple projects may want to change stand-up times to allow them to be able attend. This is problematic since it risks the sense of ownership for the team if an observer can force a stand-up to adjust to his/her schedule. Nevertheless, this must also be a consideration when deciding when to have the daily stand-up.

Huddle
Volume of speech affects attentiveness as well as effectiveness of communication. Physical distance changes the level of volume required to communicate well. Some people don't speak loudly and don't feel comfortable doing so.

Therefore
The stand-up should be more of a Huddle, than a meeting. If it's difficult to hear, bring everyone closer. Beyond allowing for a more relaxed speaking volume, being physically closer tends to cause participants to be more attentive on its own. Being able to stand physically closer is also an expression of greater trust within the team.

If the stand-up is a new thing, it's usually enough to use hand gestures to wave people in and say something to the effect of "Let's bring it in". If the size of the circle has been established for a while, consider explaining the reasons for closing the circle before trying to do it.

But
The team must balance closeness with personal comfort zones. Even on a very trusting team, there is a point when people are just standing too close for comfort. Symptoms tend to be participants that are tense and/or fidgety.

Stand Up
Some people are talkative and tend to wander off into *Story Telling*. Some people want to engage in *Problem Solving* immediately after hearing a problem. Meetings that take too long tend to have low-energy and participants not directly related to a long discussion will tend to be distracted.

Therefore
Require that all attendees Stand Up. Use standing up to link physical with mental readiness. Physical discomfort will also remind attendees when a meeting is taking too long. A simple way to encourage this is to simply hold the meeting where there are no chairs.

But
Standing up tends to cause meetings to shorten, but does not guarantee that they will shorten to an optimal length. People may learn to cope with the discomfort instead of taking a more appropriate response. Also if the meetings are **not** taking too long nor wandering off-topic, standing up is an unnecessary ritual.

See also Fifteen Minutes or Less, Take It Offline, and Time the Meetings.

FIFTEEN MINUTES OR LESS

Most people will wander mentally when they are in long meetings. A long, droning meeting is a horrible, energy-draining way to start the day. A specific number helps remind us when to consider adjustment to reduce the time of the meeting.

Therefore

Keep the daily stand-ups to FIFTEEN MINUTES OR LESS. Even shorter is even better. As a general rule, after fifteen minutes, the average person's mind is going to wander which doesn't help with setting focus.

But

Fifteen minutes may even be too long for smaller teams. Because of the mind-wandering effect, even for larger teams, fifteen minutes is a good limit.

LAST ARRIVAL SPEAKS FIRST

During a stand-up, attendees need to know who is supposed to speak first. Having the facilitator decide who should speak first is a subtle though definite force against self-organisation. The team should know without intervention who speaks first.

Therefore

Agree that the LAST ARRIVAL SPEAKS FIRST. This is a simple rule that also has the added benefit of encouraging people to be punctual about showing up for the stand-up.

SIGNAL THE END

After the last person has spoken, the team may not immediately realise that the meeting is over. The gradual realisation that it's time to walk away doesn't end the meeting on a high note and may contribute to **Low Energy**.

Therefore

SIGNAL THE END of the stand-up with a throwaway phrase [Gibbs, 2006, Signal] or some other action.

ROUND ROBIN

During a stand-up, attendees need to know who is supposed to speak next. Having a facilitator decide who speaks next is a subtle though definite force against self-organisation. The team should know without intervention who speaks next.

Therefore

Use a simple predetermined rule like a ROUND ROBIN to determine who should go next. It doesn't matter if it is clockwise or counter-clockwise. What does matter is that the team runs the meeting, not the facilitator or manager.

PASS THE TOKEN

With simple, predictable ordering mechanisms (e.g., ROUND ROBIN), it is very easy for participants to ignore other speakers until it is closer to their turn. There may be a tendency to think of other things rather than pay attention to what others are saying.

Therefore

Introduce an unpredictable ordering mechanism, like tossing a speaking token (e.g., a ball) to determine who should speak next. Having a speaking token also simplifies deciding who speaks first as it will be the person who happens to have retrieved the token (or the first person s/he tosses the token to).

Tossing something around introduces a bit of fun to the daily stand-up ritual and thus serves as a good infection mechanism for other observing teams.

I first learned of this pattern on a project I was on with Simon Stewart. We used a small juggling ball but almost anything can be used as token. Other teams have used rugby balls [Gibbs, 2006, Rugby] or even plush toys [Mar, 2006].

But
With larger teams, it may become difficult to remember who has already spoken. In those cases, it may be easier to stick to simpler mechanisms like ROUND ROBIN. Depending on the culture of the organisation or even team, tossing a ball around may also be seen as unprofessional and would create an unnecessary negative perception of the underlying ritual.

TAKE A CARD

During a stand-up, attendees need to know who is supposed to speak first and after that, who is supposed to speak next. Having a facilitator decide who should speak is a subtle though definite force against self-organisation. The team is not keen on PASS THE TOKEN because they typically have coffee cups in their hands.

Therefore
Have team member TAKE A CARD that has a number determining the order in which they will speak [Russell, 2006].

TIME THE MEETINGS

It is difficult to qualitatively judge whether a stand-up is taking too long, especially if it only gradually increases in length.

Therefore
TIME THE MEETINGS and publish the results. Most of the time, attendees just don't realise the impact of *Story Telling*, not being prepared to TAKE IT OFFLINE, or not preparing have on how long the meeting will take. Make it quantifiable.

But
As with all measures, don't introduce it unless there is an actual goal to accomplish (*e.g.,* increase energy level of the daily stand-up) and a corresponding question that highlights what needs to be done (*e.g.,* how long are the meetings actually taking). Once the goal is accomplished, drop the measurement. Measuring for no particular reason leads to suspicion and metrics apathy. This is a simplification of the Goal Question Metric approach [Briand et al., 2002]

YESTERDAY TODAY OBSTACLES

Some people are talkative and tend to wander off into *Story Telling*. Some people want to engage in *Problem Solving* immediately after hearing a problem. Meetings that take too long tend to have low energy and participants not directly related to a long discussion will tend to be distracted.

Therefore
Structure the contributions using the following format:
• What did I accomplish yesterday?
• What will I do today?
• What obstacles are impeding my progress?

These are the minimum number of questions that satisfy the goals of daily stand-ups. Other topics of discussion (*e.g.*, design discussions, gossip, etc.) should be deferred until after the meeting.

Lasse Koskela proposed another form of these questions in order to emphasise that team members should not be **Reporting to the Leader**:

> ***Each team member updates his peers:***
>
> > *In turn, each team member provides his peers with 3 pieces of information:*
> > 1. *Things I have done since yesterday's meeting*
> > 2. *Things I am going to get done today*
> > 3. *Obstacles that I need someone to remove*

[Koskela, 2006]

If we reconsider this in light of a focus on commitment, the questions might be re-worded as follows:
- Was I able to fulfill what I committed to?
- What am I comfortable committing to today?
- What is obstructing me in meeting my commitments?

I prefer this question form for it's clarity though the original form may be simpler.

But
The structure is not as important as the information the answers to the questions provide. If the information is provided in a less structured protocol, it is not important to stick to a checklist. As teams mature, you may find you want to adjust the structure as well. For example, I tend to add a fourth question: "What might help or hinder others in meeting their commitments?"

TAKE IT OFFLINE
Some people want to engage in *Problem Solving* immediately after hearing a problem. Meetings that take too long tend to have low-energy and participants not directly related to a long discussion will tend to be distracted. It is still important to acknowledge that further discussion will be required to solve the raised problem. Some people may find it uncomfortable to enforce the structure of the stand-up by interrupting.

Therefore
Use a simple and consistent phrase like "Take it offline" as a reminder that such discussions should take place outside of the daily stand-up. If the discussion was *Socialising*, nothing more is required. If the discussion was *Problem Solving*, the facilitator (and eventually just the team) should ensure that the right people are nominated or sign up to deal with the issue later.

But
There is a difference between *Problem Solving* and a clarifying question. Information that is not understood is not useful. The extent upon which clarifying questions are allowed should vary depending on how large the team is and whether it will impact FIFTEEN MINUTES OR LESS.

FOCUS ON THE BACKLOG
Some people find it difficult to keep the project context in mind when they are contributing. Symptoms of this would be attendees leaving the stand-up without a clear awareness of what remains for the iteration and release, and not much of a direct relationship with issues raised during the stand-up and the progress of the iteration and release.

It is much easier to understand project context with a visible reminder.

Therefore
Remind stand-up attendees to FOCUS ON THE BACKLOG. For example, maintain an information radiator [Cockburn, 2001] (aka Big Visible Chart) showing the iteration and release status and hold the stand-up near it. The display serves as an obvious reminder of what remains to be done.

But
Focusing on the backlog may cause a tendency for the stand-up to focus on tasks rather than people. There are always important and subtle people issues that will not be discovered if there is too much focus on task status.

BLOCKAGE BOARD
Obstacles raised in the stand-up are not removed or otherwise addressed in a timely fashion.

Therefore
Post raised obstacles to a BLOCKAGE BOARD. This is a publicly visible whiteboard or chart that identifies raised obstacles and tracks the progress of their resolution. A BLOCKAGE BOARD can be updated outside of

stand-ups and serves as a more immediate and perhaps less confronting way to initially raise obstacles. A common mistake is to not write large enough to allow people to read the blockages from a distance.

ROTATE THE FACILITATOR
Team members are **Reporting to the Leader**, that is, they're only talking to the meeting facilitator instead of each other. Only the meeting facilitator is raising and addressing process issues related to the stand-up. We want the team to take ownership of the stand-up and this requires removing any dependence on a single facilitator.

Therefore
ROTATE THE FACILITATOR. Rotate assignment of a role responsible for ensuring people attend the stand-up and stick to the agreed upon rules.

But
Teams that are not experienced with stand-ups benefit greatly from having a coach experienced in the process. It is more that the team should be weaned into taking greater control of the stand-up. At some point, no explicit facilitator should be required at all.

BREAK EYE CONTACT
Team members are **Reporting to the Leader**, that is, they're only talking to the meeting facilitator instead of each other. We want the team to take ownership of the stand-up and this requires removing any dependence on a single facilitator.

Therefore
As a facilitator, BREAK EYE CONTACT [Nicolette, 2006] as a subtle way of reminding the speaker that s/he should be addressing the team, not just one person. One way to do this is to move around [Shimp, 2006] so that the current speaker can't see you.

Smells

> *I endured regular stand-up meetings for three years. What made the meetings most painful was my boss (I'll call him Wally). His main reason for the stand-up meeting was not to increase efficiency or embrace XP as much as it was to shorten human interaction beyond anything directly related to the work product. ... For Wally, however, the stand-up meeting (like the 7 a.m. Monday meeting and the 5 p.m. Friday meeting) was a loyalty test designed to reinforce the employer-employee relationship. [LaPlante, 2003]*

The feel of an effective stand-up is about how you know when things are going right. Smells are about how you know when things are going wrong. It is important to note that even if you have no smells, this does not mean the stand-up is going right. It just means that it doesn't "stink".

Most of the following smells are linked back to the previous patterns. For those that are not, the underlying issues tend to be more subtle or outside the scope of the daily stand-up, and people will have to come up with their own solutions.

Reporting to the Leader
> *Team members should address the Team. This is not a "Reporting to the ScrumMaster" meeting. [Cochango, 2006]*

Team members are facing and talking to the manager or meeting facilitator instead of to the team. This indicates that the daily stand-up is for the manager/facilitator when it is actually supposed to be for the team. There are various ways to break this dependence: ROTATE THE FACILITATOR, BREAK EYE CONTACT, change the form of YESTERDAY TODAY OBSTACLES, use PASS THE TOKEN, etc.

People are Late
This is directly addressed by SAME PLACE, SAME TIME, but as mentioned may indicate that the stand-up is being held at the wrong time or at the wrong place.

Stand-up Meeting Starts the Day... Late
Because the stand-up is seen to start the work day, no work is done before the stand-up. Depending on how late in the morning the stand-up is, this can have a significant impact on available working hours. This leads to Dᴏɴ'ᴛ Uꜱᴇ ᴛʜᴇ Sᴛᴀɴᴅ-ᴜᴘ ᴛᴏ Sᴛᴀʀᴛ ᴛʜᴇ Dᴀʏ.

Observers Interrupt
Regular interruption by observers is very disruptive to the delivery team by challenging the premise that the daily stand-up is primarily for the delivery team. Interruption also threatens Fɪꜰᴛᴇᴇɴ Mɪɴᴜᴛᴇꜱ ᴏʀ Lᴇꜱꜱ. Enforce Pɪɢꜱ ᴀɴᴅ Cʜɪᴄᴋᴇɴꜱ.

Socialising
One of the goals of the stand-up is to increase team socialisation. However, the daily stand-up is not intended for team members to "catch up" with each other on non project-related matters. It's difficult to provide examples of this since the degree to which socialising passes from team-building to distracting varies from team to team. The threshold can be detected from the behaviours of participants not directly involved in the socialisation. If their energy levels remain high, then it's probably just team-building; if their energy levels drop, then Tᴀᴋᴇ Iᴛ Oꜰꜰʟɪɴᴇ and perhaps provide another forum to act as a Wᴀᴛᴇʀ Cᴏᴏʟᴇʀ [OrgPatternsWaterCooler].

I Can't Remember
"What did I do yesterday?... I can't remember... What am I doing today?... I dunno..."

Daily stand-ups are meetings. Like all meetings, participants have a responsibility to prepare. In this case, all participants are responsible for knowing the answers to Yᴇꜱᴛᴇʀᴅᴀʏ Oʙꜱᴛᴀᴄʟᴇꜱ Tᴏᴅᴀʏ. There can be more leniency when it comes to not knowing what will done today since sometimes there is actually nothing specific planned except picking the next highest priority task off the stack.

Lack of preparation causes slower pace which causes lower energy. It also risks failing Fɪꜰᴛᴇᴇɴ Mɪɴᴜᴛᴇꜱ ᴏʀ Lᴇꜱꜱ, which further reduces energy levels.

Story Telling
Instead of providing a brief description of an issue, the participant provides enough details and context to cause others to tune out. The general rule is to identify obstacles during the stand-up and discuss the details after the stand-up. This can be summarised as "Tell the headline, not the whole story" or Tᴀᴋᴇ ɪᴛ Oꜰꜰʟɪɴᴇ.

Problem Solving
The key to keeping the stand-ups Fɪꜰᴛᴇᴇɴ Mɪɴᴜᴛᴇꜱ ᴏʀ Lᴇꜱꜱ is to limit the ***Story Telling*** and not succumb to **Problem Solving** during the meeting. Tᴀᴋᴇ ɪᴛ Oꜰꜰʟɪɴᴇ.

Low Energy
Could indicate a slow-down of pace due to ***Story Telling***, ***Problem Solving***, etc. In which case Tᴀᴋᴇ ɪᴛ Oꜰꜰʟɪɴᴇ. Could be simply a matter of team size. Could be the time of day which suggests trying the alternative of Uꜱᴇ ᴛʜᴇ Sᴛᴀɴᴅ-ᴜᴘ ᴛᴏ Sᴛᴀʀᴛ ᴛʜᴇ Dᴀʏ and Dᴏɴ'ᴛ Uꜱᴇ ᴛʜᴇ Sᴛᴀɴᴅ-ᴜᴘ ᴛᴏ Sᴛᴀʀᴛ ᴛʜᴇ Dᴀʏ.

Obstacles are not Raised
There may be several reasons for obstacles not being raised. Not remembering, high pain threshold, lack of trust in raising issues (because ***Obstacles are not Removed***, ***Observers Interrupt*** with blaming), etc. Depending on the context, just introducing Yᴇꜱᴛᴇʀᴅᴀʏ Oʙꜱᴛᴀᴄʟᴇꜱ Tᴏᴅᴀʏ and enforcing Pɪɢꜱ ᴀɴᴅ Cʜɪᴄᴋᴇɴꜱ may not be enough. Introducing a Bʟᴏᴄᴋᴀɢᴇ Bᴏᴀʀᴅ may provide a less confronting medium to raise obstacles. Retrospectives [Kerth, 2001] are an effective way of discovering the underlying reason why ***Obstacles are not Raised***.

Obstacles are not Removed
With the exception of a blaming environment, the surest way to stop people from raising obstacles is to not remove them. To make it difficult to forget and/or ignore obstacles, track them publicly with a Bʟᴏᴄᴋᴀɢᴇ Bᴏᴀʀᴅ.

Obstacles are Only Raised in the Stand-up
Stand-ups act as a safety net. At worst, an obstacle will be communicated to the greater team within one day. However, doing stand-ups is not intended to stop issues from being raised and resolved during the day. Introducing an alternative medium to raise obstacles such as a Blockage Board may help. If not, underlying reasons may be discovered using retrospectives.

Conclusion

Hopefully this paper has provided some more insight into the subtle details of effective stand-up practices and also common problem indicators. It should be clear that a daily stand-up is not just standing up together every day.

It is important not to be too concerned about not having every pattern or even having some of the smells. If all the goals are satisfied and the "feel" is good, you're probably okay. After all, it's really just standing up together every day.

Related Work

As far as I know, there are no other low-level patterns papers on daily stand-ups though the core ideas exist in the referenced papers. There are a couple online articles on daily stand-up anti-patterns or smells ([Miller, 2003], [Cohn, 2003]) though both are limited in scope.

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