Introduction to Observational Coaching
What is Observational Coaching

An Approach to Coaching Centered on Observations
and a
Great Place to Start!
developer traveler MSc British
agile community start-up technology
lean coach continuous learner mentor
organizational change kaizen metrics kanban Java
Scrum computer science DevOps
facilitator speaker

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What is Observational Coaching

An Approach to Coaching Centered on Observations and a Great Place to Start!

Also for the More Experienced Coach!
Clever Hans

Hans, how much is two plus three?
Clever Hans

Ja, du bist so Kluge!

That's right! You're so clever!
Clever Hans

Really?
Observer Expectancy Effect

Expectations and anchors in an observer’s perspective create unconscious behaviors that skew the results of the observations or even the actual behavior of the participants.
Introduction to Observational Coaching
Make Observations
“People at my work don’t care about quality.”
Let's Observe a Daily Scrum

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKIc1NFO
Observe Your Team

Facts are facts.

It either happened or it didn't happen.

Facts don't care about what you believe.

Hypotheses, interpretations and opinions are not facts.

They don't become facts even if you say so.
TCF Coaching Structure

Coaching Cards
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Team</th>
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</table>

**Make Observations**
What are you seeing? Stay objective.

**Identify Hypotheses**
Why might I be observing these things?

**Identify Indicators**
How do you know you are getting there?

**Set a Goal**
What would be better behavior?

**Pick Tools**
Keep it simple. Try and validate or discard.
Table Talk!

Pick a Pattern!
Make Multiple Hypotheses
Hypotheses

**Definition (Wikipedia):**

‘a supposition or proposed explanation made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation’
Hypotheses

**Pattern:**

Nearly all improvements selected in retrospectives for Team Wombat are about how other teams affect them, not how they work internally.

• Team does not feel comfortable discussing internal challenges with each other.

• Team does not understand the purpose of the retrospective.

• Impact from other teams is so great that all other challenges seem small in comparison.
Make Multiple Hypotheses
Now Pick One
Set a Goal

Problem-solving goal: "We want to have less boring daily standups."

Transforming goal: "We want to have valuable and enjoyable daily standups."
Set Indicators
Types of Indicators

Leading - To understand if we are getting closer to the goal

Lagging - To understand if we have reached the goal
Invalidate Your Hypothesis
Observer Expectancy Effect

Remember Me?
Now, Choose Your Tools

A Coaching Tool is an intervention that permanently changes the habits of the team.
Some coaching tools:

- **Surveys**
  - 18 TEAM
  - agile assessment
  - questionnaire
  - "check on the team" (questionnaire + spider diagram)

- **Flow**
  - limit WIP (kanban system)
  - small batches
  - pomodoro technique
  - timebox
  - meeting timer
  - prioritized backlog (list of TO DOs)
  - name game
  - mob programming

- **Care**
  - Teach them positivity and respect
  - appreciation (promote good behavior)
  - sharing positive examples or behaviors (sharing in a meeting)
  - hugging
  - be silly
  - do the Scrum dance

- **Community of Practice**
  - camps (e.g. PO Camp, coach camp)
  - lean coffee
  - hot topics
  - brown bag sessions
  - book circles

- **Validated Learning**
  - idea cards (team startup, validated learning)

- **Documents/Checklists**
  - scrummaster self-help worksheet
  - scrummaster checklist

- **Guiding**
  - team coaching framework (PPT)
  - kantō method
  - mentoring (internal & external)
  - sit with team / observe behavior
  - agile strategy map
  - gold card
  - coaching structure

- **Training / Education**
  - 4Cs
  - marshmallow challenge
  - kata
  - dojo
  - kanban pizza game
  - get kanban game

- **Backlog**
  - portfolio budgeting
  - release mapping
  - release / portfolio planning meeting
  - opportunity canvas
  - risk radar
  - backlog grooming
  - story splitting
  - impact mapping
  - user story mapping (focus on large business process view and break it down in smaller stories)

- **User Story**
  - focus on user value and allow for conversation vs. written communication

- **Vision**
  - elevator pitch workshop

- **Metrics**
  - team ladder
  - GFD
  - PO/Release/Portfolio metrics / dashboards
  - team metrics/dashboards
  - control charts/histograms

- **Questions**
  - miracle questions
  - Kent Tomm questions
  - scaling questions
  - powerful questions
  - bridging questions

- **Decision-making**
  - involve teams in decisions
  - fist to five (quick voting, used to get impressions on the going)
  - thumb voting
  - roman vote
  - dot voting (coaching tool used for rapid prioritization and decision making)
  - traffic lights (to check working agreements and DoD)
  - decision patterns for common tasks and questions (e.g. what kind of documentation is needed for this study)

- **Evaluation**
  - planning poker (facilitation tool structure conversation about product development)
  - relative estimation (bubble sort)
  - business value game (facilitation to allow stakeholders alignment with business goals)
  - #estimates

- **Team building**
  - ABIDE (attraction, barrier, identity, diversity, environment)
  - make the team learn personal stuff
  - create stories in team
  - everyone write a story (no gender no name - send to facilitate - hang up - guess who is who)
  - trad. team building (e.g. bowling)
  - market of skills
  - team name
  - team rewards
  - do food (beer)
  - maximum pain (let them fail)
  - team space (chairs, table, board, flipcharts)
  - speed dating and other techniques for self-forming of teams (requires 3+ teams)
  - growing learners exercise
  - hudson bay start

- **Information Radiator**
  - happy/sad board
  - portfolio board
  - missing to ton
  - spider chart (team dimensions)
  - burnout chart
  - burnup chart
  - laugh-o-mat

- **Visualizing**
  - visual board
  - visualize workflow
  - team board
  - avatars on team board
  - task board (visualize the flow of work)
  - draw your process (kind of value stream)
  - PO board
  - value stream mapping (kanban board (visualize the flow))

- **Policies**
  - working agreements
  - definition of done
  - release definition of done
  - definition of ready
  - pull policy

- **Problem solving**
  - pairing
  - branwriting
  - pair programming
  - evaporating cloud
  - 4D model
  - Fearless journey
  - 5 why’s

- **Sustainable pace**
  - personal kanban
  - core protocols
  - improvement backlog
  - demand analysis

- **Retrospective**
  - active learning cycle
  - startsh
  - pre-mortem
  - safety check
  - ROTI (return of time invested at the end of the meetings)
  - reflecting team
  - kaizen (continuous improvement practices)
  - speedboat (gather data exercise/game)
Executing on Coaching Cards
Executing on Coaching Cards
Empirical Process

Transparency

Inspect

Adapt

Observations

Hypotheses

Tools

Metrics

Goals

1 2 3 4 5
Coach With Pairs and Teams
What's the problem?

- How do you get money and support from your sponsor?
- How do you record what is going on in your team?
- How can you describe the situation to a mentor?
- How do you get good input from a colleague?
- How do you know if your work is actually helping the team?
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<th>ToDo</th>
<th>In Progress</th>
<th>Leading</th>
<th>Lagging</th>
<th>Done</th>
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Learn More

• agile42.com/newsletter

• https://tcf.agile42.com

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