



Free Resources

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Credits:

• Scrum Certification: What Does It Really Mean?:

V. Lee Henson CST
<http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

• Setting Executive Expectations:

V. Lee Henson CST
<http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

• How do I become certified?:

V. Lee Henson CST
<http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

• Calling All Writers!

V. Lee Henson CST
<http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

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This Certified Scrum Trainer's experience spans a broad array of technical software production roles and responsibilities. Lee has worked hands on as a GUI web developer, quality assurance analyst, automated test engineer, senior product manager, senior project manager, ScrumMaster, agile coach, consultant, and ADDIE training professional. He has worked with hundreds of teams to assist them in successful implementation of thousands of projects. His client list includes Fortune 500 companies, Government sector projects, small and large software production facilities, and multiple successful large scale e-commerce implementations.

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Scrum Certification: What Does It Really Mean?

I remember in the early days of project management when things were simple and people either had a PMP certification or they did not. The PMP was a signature that indicated that the Project Management Professional in question had worked in the trenches and qualified to hold the sacred title. With this generally came some amount of real world experience and a hunger to help teams successfully launch and implement projects.

Recently we have been bombarded with a number of certifications each of which promise us to be the holy grail of project management. In no way do I claim to be the authority on each and every certification, but I do have a very vocal opinion about one certification.

Rightfully, many people have established views, both positive and negative about the Certified ScrumMaster (CSM) program. Part of the confusion stems from people in the agile community having an initial view that all you need to do is take a 2-day class without any prior project management experience and become the Master of all things Scrum.

As a Certified Scrum Trainer I am here to tell you this is simply not the case. The Scrum Alliance has been working feverishly to put together a more tidy

outline regarding pre-requisites, qualified candidates, and an overall more stringent certification process. The title of ScrumMaster was never intended to be taken lightly. The 2-day session taught by a Certified Scrum Trainer in accordance with all of the rules set forth in a course governed by the Scrum Alliance is intended to give a prepared project manager the tools they need to successfully assist in implementing Scrum within their organization. At the time of this printing, there were about 30,000 Certified ScrumMasters worldwide.

This level of certification does indicate:

- The individual took a Scrum Alliance approved course under the instruction of a Certified Scrum Trainer
- Has exhibited a clear understanding of Scrum principles and should be able to assist in promoting a healthy Scrum environment in the workplace
- Has met all of the requirements as set forth by the certification process to carry the title Certified ScrumMaster

Calling All Writers!

Please do not be mistaken, I have plenty of content to present in this newsletter, but after much thought, I want this to be your newsletter. With that being said, here is your chance!

I am looking for like-minded people who desire to get their Agile message published in a reputable newsletter. All submissions will be reviewed and only a select few will make the cut.

This is a great chance to share your message with a very active group of readers who share a passion for Agile development practices.

Here is the fine print. All submissions need to be submitted in MS Word or comparable format. The article should be clear and concise. We have plenty of room here to get your point across. All entries should be submitted electronically to agiledad@gmail.com for consideration in the next month's publication.

There is no cash payment of any kind for the article being published. You will be paid with deepest gratitude from your peers in the Agile community for your contribution. You will also get to publish a short bio about yourself in the about the author section. This could be your chance to introduce yourself to the world!

Thanks & See You Real Soon!



Scrum Certification: What Does It Really Mean? Continued

"The Certified ScrumMaster course is intended as a foundation to build upon."

– V. Lee Henson CST

Although at first glance this may not seem like a lot, these basic requirements are the foundation necessary for the newly Certified ScrumMaster to be effective in implementing all of the basic principles of Scrum and should be able to successfully facilitate everything needed to fill the role.

I certainly do not want to make light of this two day training session, but it is intended as a foundation for the ScrumMaster to build upon to be ultimately successful in their role.

The next two levels of certification offered by the Scrum Alliance are the core of what makes Scrum teams successful. The next level is Certified Scrum Practitioner (CSP). At this level, the candidate must have already completed a Certified ScrumMaster Course, must have practiced Scrum actively on an agile team for a period of no less than one year, and must pass a rather stringent multi-verification peer review. The application alone is multiple pages and really does exemplify what it takes to achieve this level.

At the time of this print run there were less than 350 Certified Scrum Practitioners worldwide! This is quite a difference and illustrates that the rubber really hits the pavement at this level. Part of my role in assisting the Scrum Alliance has been to serve on the certifying committee for CSP's.

I have seen a great increase in the level of highly qualified candidates who apply for and successfully become Certified Scrum Practitioners. This group represents a core set of individuals who have proven their ability to Scrum.

The highest degree of certification offered by the Scrum Alliance for those without an interest in training others directly is Certified Scrum Coach (CSC). At the time of this printing, there were only a handful of Certified Scrum Coaches worldwide! This level of certification illustrates that this individual has not only exhibited excellence in practicing all Scrum principles, but they have expressed an interest in coaching others to success!

This level is quite difficult to achieve and shows the stance of the Scrum Alliance to assure those in the role of hiring the most qualified candidate that they have indeed found an individual that can confidently lead and direct Scrum teams to success consistently.

With each level of certification comes a higher degree of difficulty to achieve and a much higher rate of success.

"I see GREAT value in the Scrum Certification Process."

– V. Lee Henson CST

Qualified individuals should not be afraid to press forward in achieving the next level of certification.

There is no question that I see GREAT value in the Certification process as set forth by the Scrum Alliance. As a Certified Scrum Trainer, I am confident that my course helps pave the way for ScrumMasters to be great contributors within your organization. For more information about Scrum Certification or to locate a certification class near you please visit: www.scrumalliance.org



Scrum Certification: Attend A Class Get Certified!

For those of you not exactly keeping track, this issue of Agile Mentor focuses on the topic of Scrum and the certification process. As a Certified Scrum Trainer, I see great value in the course and it is proven that the graduates who become certified are better equipped to lead teams successfully.

The level of enthusiasm you have toward effective project of program management should match the highest level of Certification you attempt to achieve.

A second course will be offered in Atlanta, GA on July 15-16. To register for either of these courses please visit:

<http://www.scrumalliance.org/courses/2791-certified-scrummaster>

This link will take you directly to the registration page for the Salt Lake course and allow you to access the Atlanta class in a single click.

Register early for either class at the discounted rate of \$1250.00 per student!

Of Note:

Although the core material covered in the course will be the same, each Certified Scrum Trainer may have a different specialty that allows them to teach the class with a bit different flair. This course is very interactive and high energy. I have worked in just about every role on an agile team and can say I have literally walked at least a mile in your shoes. When selecting a class that is best to suit the needs of your organization, be certain to review the background of the trainer offering the session. The end result will be the best fit for your organization.

This Month's Agile Q&A

Q: How do I become a CSM, CSP, CSC or CSPO?

A: Great question! The very first step is to find a course near you. Please visit <http://www.scrumalliance.org> for a complete listing of courses being offered in your area.

As a word of caution, many other websites offer Scrum/Agile related courses that are not taught by qualified individuals and do not offer certification of any type. These courses have not been sanctioned by the Scrum Alliance and the materials used for training cannot be validated.

Materials from one Certified Scrum Trainer to the next may vary slightly, but they are approved materials and do cover all certification materials.



The official Certified Scrum Courses do also qualify for you to receive PDU credits applicable toward higher levels of Scrum Certification.

Just as with any course you take, be cautious in where you find and register for the course. Also, do a thorough review of the instructor and their experience. In many cases you may be able to locate an instructor with loads of real-world experience in an environment similar to the one in which you currently are working.

For the sake of example, please feel free to visit my Trainer profile at:

<http://www.scrumalliance.org/profiles/91-v-lee-henson> to get a feel for what you can expect to see.

EYE ON IT Setting Executive Expectations

On many occasions I have had the opportunity to offer a class on what agile means for an organization directly to a group of executives and board members. On more than one occasion I was warned not to take too much of their time. I was also counseled on 'what they wanted to hear', prior to each session.

I sheepishly smiled and accepted their counsel then proceeded to the meeting. The fact is that every executive wants and deserves is a group of people to report to him in a clear and direct manner the status of projects throughout the company. They are not as interested in the candy-coated answer that you may think they need to hear.

I have been told after these two hour sessions more than once that the time spent was the most valuable they have had since considering agile methods. Do not be afraid to schedule the meeting and establish reasonable forthright expectations. Your executives and board members will be thankful that you did!

CSM Course Course offering in Salt Lake City

On July 8-9 all of the Salt Lake Valley will be abuzz! The first highly interactive Certified ScrumMaster Course will be offered along the Wasatch Front!

This two day course offers all of the materials required to achieve certification, and also offers a series of real-world exercises that let you experience a complete Scrum project from start to finish in varying roles.

The cost for this class has been reduced to \$1250 / person for Agile Mentor Newsletter subscribers. This will sell out so act fast!

www.scrumalliance.org/courses/2791-certified-scrummaster