280Group

Optimizing Product Management™

Case**Study**

IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
PRODUCT MANAGEMENT WORKING
WITH DISTRIBUTED AGILE TEAMS

Informatica

How private training in Agile and People Skills improved product development processes at Informatica.

the**Challenge**

With a 20+ year history in database technologies, and as a world leader in Enterprise Cloud Data Management, Informatica is a technology company that has both significant heritage and cutting-edge expertise. But even companies with this pedigree can improve their internal capabilities.

Like many companies today, Informatica had decided to employ Agile development methods to improve their product quality and time-to-market delivery. But they were finding it difficult to coordinate their efforts across multiple product lines, three continents, and amongst different groups of Product Managers, Product Owners, and development teams. These challenges were compounded by different degrees of Agile adoption amongst the development teams, and different levels of experience with Agile methodology amongst the Product Managers. In addition, some Product Managers had come from a development background and were not experienced in how to be effective product leaders with their teams. As a result, the team members had each developed their own way of managing the complexities of their jobs in isolation, and weren't sharing best practices across the many divides they were faced with.

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"Our team of Product Managers have been reinvigorated. They used the training to learn, discuss and now try out new tools and approaches to increase the quality of their work."

Lesly Hanley
Senior Director of
Product Management

the**Solution**

Informatica researched different providers and chose 280 Group to deliver two complimentary courses. One of their critical evaluation criteria was the expertise of a trainer who had real world Product Management experience to guide the conversations with the cross-functional Product Management team. The overall goals were:

1 Increase and level-set the skill level of the Product Managers in their ability to collaborate effectively with an Agile development team.

2 Increase the people skills abilities of the Product Managers who had joined from the development side.

3 Understand Product Management best practices from outside Informatica.

Informatica chose 280 Group's private training option instead of joining a public class so that cross functional team learning could be done in an environment which encouraged open discussion and sharing of ideas and approaches. This allowed more experienced team members to share how best to apply new concepts within Informatica, for the team to identify processes and systems that needed to be improved across teams, functions, and geographies, and to assign ownership for the needed follow up activities.

The courses chosen focused on developing hard and soft skills:

• Agile for Product Managers and Product Owners

• People Skills for Product Managers and Product Marketers

Informatica worked with the 280 Group trainer to ensure that the right emphasis was placed on the different topics appropriate to their current structure, culture and market situation.

During the course, the group shared their experiences as to what worked and what didn't work within the organization. The 280 Group trainer brought outside experience to bear on best practices in getting the work done and how organizations place people for best overall results. And any topics that needed further attention were documented along the way and discussed in more detail once the training was complete.

the**Results**

Today the Product Management team is more confident in their roles and responsibilities as Agile team members. They have put in place common processes, based on industry and Informatica best practices, so that they can lead their teams and ensure consistent results. The management team now sees Product Managers stepping up and taking on leadership responsibilities in a more thoughtful, consistent and pro-active way.

the**Conclusion**

Informatica gained significant benefits by leveraging 280 Group's industry-leading Product Management experience and expertise. Bringing the cross-functional team together to increase their knowledge of Product Management specific Agile best practices, combined with more general leadership and collaboration skills has led to more productive and efficient cross-company communication, and improved the effectiveness of the development process at Informatica.