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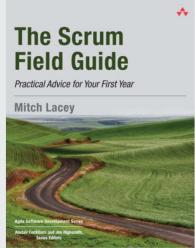*expertise worth sharing*

Mitch Lacey

- Author: *The Scrum Field Guide*
- 15+ years of project management experience
- Former Agile and Scrum Alliance Board Member
- Project Management Professional (PMP)
- Certified Scrum Trainer (CST)
- *Twitter*: @mglacey
- *Web*: http://mitchlacey.com

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The Scrum Field Guide
Practical Advice for Your First Year
Mitch Lacey

Agile Software Development Series
Alistair Cockburn and Jim Highsmith, Series Editors

3J

Jonathan Wanagel

- Principal Dev Lead for www.CodePlex.com

- Started with Extreme Programming in 2000

- Conducted over 100 developer interviews

- Believes in the art of recruiting / team building as much as the art of developing software

In This Session, You'll Learn…

- Reasons to change
- How to create a good interview experience
- Common interviewing mistakes
- Modern interviewing techniques

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Reasons to Change

- Creates a better forecast of success
- Minimizes costs from bad hires
- Ensures a good cultural fit
- Makes a positive impression on candidates

- Results in better hires, faster and cheaper

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Interviewing Fundamentals

- Only three questions:
  - Can they do the job?
  - Will they be motivated?
  - Would they get along with co-workers?

- Importance of an accurate forecast and a positive interviewing experience

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Hiring Anti-patterns

- The Riddler
- The Disorienter
- The Stone Tablet
- The Knuth Fanatic

- The Cram Session
- Groundhog Day
- The Gladiator
- Hear No Evil

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The Riddler

- Asks puzzle questions to "see how you think".
  - Why are manhole covers round?

- Problems:
  - Forecast: Too abstract and removed to correlate abilities to job function.
  - Candidate Experience: Are you serious? This company has no idea how to find talent.

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The Disorienter

- Asks programming questions with low correlation to job.
  - Write a Suduko game (never mind that the job does not entail writing games).
  - Others roman numerals, minesweeper, etc.

- Problems:
  - Forecasting: They can write games, but do they have the skills for the job?
  - Candidate Experience: I feel lost and frustrated. How can I show my skills when I'm not being asked about them?

Modern Techniques

- Come up with scenarios that relate more directly to job.

- Think of something the team has done recently and ask candidate how they would have approached problem.

The Stone Tablet

- Uses a whiteboard for programming testing.

- Problems:
  - Forecasting: Whiteboard coding is unnatural, so gives fewer insights into true coding abilities.
  - Candidate Experience: Inadequate means to demonstrate capabilities. Does company still use punchcards too?

Modern Techniques

- Use a computer with a keyboard. Notepad is good, an IDE is better.

- Consider a pair programming session. This will give insights into programming skills, as well as collaboration and cultural characteristics.

13J

The Knuth Fanatic

- The only meaningful questions come out of "The Book" of algorithms & data structures by Donald Knuth.

- Problems:
  - Forecast: Most modern software development requires skills outside of algorithms & data structures.
  - Candidate Experience: Does this company ever interview anyone other than recent college grads? Do they even care about my 10 years of experience, and breadth/depth of skills?

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Modern Techniques

- Create a list of skills to evaluate. Divide topics among interviewers, and judge on overall set of capabilities. Examples:

  - Unit testing   - Database development
  - Design / Architecture   - Client development
  - Agile Processes   - Teamwork
  - Open source   - Conflict Resolution

- Immersive approach, simulate working with the person. Team members & candidate work together to demonstrate capabilities.

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The Cram Session

- I know what I want the candidate to say, and if they say it, they get the job.

- Problems:
  - Forecast: They can take a test, but can they do the job?
  - Candidate Experience: I remember this from college. Record the sound bites for playback and I'm golden.

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Modern Techniques

- Studying for the interview should not make a difference in passing, only their 10 years of experience should. Otherwise something is wrong with the interviews.

- Use this rule as an evaluation of your questions and approach in interviewing.

17M

Groundhog Day

- Uses the same questions for every interview. Every time.

- Problems:
  - Forecast: Issues with false positives/negatives. Candidate may or may not have the skills; questions aren't tailored to explore.
  - Candidate Experience: I know how to do 70%, but was asked questions in the 30%.
  - Good thing I asked my buddy what questions they ask beforehand so I got the job anyway.

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Modern Techniques

- Constantly strive for improvement through experimentation.
  - Every interview should have at least one new thing you're trying.
- Tailor questions to the candidate.
  - Explore what they *do* know versus checking for specific knowledge.

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The Gladiator

- It isn't an interview, it is a grueling gauntlet of challenges. Prove your worthiness through our battle for survival!

- Problems:
  - Forecast: Stress interferes with candidates focus. Hopefully severe stress management skills are not mandatory for job.
  - Candidate Experience: Who'd want to work here? What a bunch of jerks!

Modern Techniques

- Don't make the interview a challenge, make it an exploratory conversation.

- Make the context about learning about each other, not proving they can match the challenge.

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Hear No Evil

- Never seeks feedback from candidates on interviewing skills.

- Problems:
  - Forecast: Who knows? Forecasting doesn't improve.
  - Candidate Experience: That was painful, someone really needs to show that person how to conduct a good interview.

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Modern Techniques

- Send a post-interview survey to all candidates asking for ratings on each interviewer, and general feedback on interviewing experience.

- Collect tips from top rated interviewers to share with lower ranked interviewers.

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Lastly, A Good Outcome

- Candidate should feel like they spent an enjoyable day working at the company--not a day interviewing at the company.

- The company should have an accurate forecast of what would happen if candidate was hired, based on the skills and competencies exhibited.

- Desired culture is reinforced by hiring decisions.

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Any questions?

Thank you for joining us!