

Events

5/8/09 – The Transitions “BarCamp”- 10am-3pm

BA’s, PM’s and other IT workers are invited to a %Transitions+BarCamp. This event will be primarily geared around career transitions for the unemployed, contractors and freelancers; however anyone thinking about career change or worried about weathering the recession is welcome. BarCamp is a user generated ad-hoc conference with open, participatory workshop content provided by participants. It is an intense event with discussions and interaction from actor-participants who share and learn in an open environment.

At the %Camp+time, pick up your current work, bring your laptop and set up at the Caroline Collective. Feel free to invite a friend. You can attend a planned session, convene your own working session, bounce ideas off each other, socialize, do a joint project or just work in a companionable environment to accelerate serendipity. Come and go at your convenience.

Please register at:
<http://itbatransitionsbarcamp.eventbrite.com/>

5/13/09 – APLNH Chapter Meeting – 5:30pm

It’s ALWAYS been the Problem. Many software development companies do not have the luxury of having real-time access to actual customers. Instead these companies rely on



their Product Management organizations to represent the needs of customers and the market.

Simon Orrell will describe how the Pragmatic approach

to Product Management gives the Product Owner and the entire team a collective understanding of the value of solving problems for markets and customers.

Please register at:
<http://aplnhouston20090513.eventbrite.com/>

Contents

Events	1
Are you a Superperformer?	2
Volunteer Opportunities.....	2
The Discussion is Growing . Are You a Part? ..	2
Three Pounds of Manure in a Two-Pound Sack	2
Agile in a Downturn	3
APLN Houston Can Come to You.....	3
Book-of-the-Month	3
APLN Houston Leadership Team	3

5/20 – 5/21/09 – Training Event: Collaborating & Communicating Agile Requirements

Project failures are often due to poor requirements gathering, analysis and planning. Agile requirements gathering, by moving detailed requirements closer to implementation, allows for rapid response to change.

Please register at:
<http://www.aspe-sdlc.com/courses/2580/>

5/20- 5/21-09 - Certified Scrum Master Training

Take advantage of this opportunity to become a Certified Scrum Master. In addition to the two day class, there is an optional 1-day workshop on May 22nd to gain further hands-on experience. **Roland Cuellar** and **Sanjiv Augustine** present the class.

For more details and to register please visit:
http://www.lithespeed.com/CSM_Detail.htm





6/10/09 – APLNH Chapter Meeting – 5:30pm

Program to be announced.

Look for registration details soon at:
<http://aplnhouston20090610.eventbrite.com/>

6/12/09 – APLN Leadership Summit

"Leading in Challenging Times: Agile Software Leadership Principles That Work"
co-located with the Better Software Conference and EXPO in Las Vegas, NV.

Join leaders from the industry- Sue McKinney, Vice President of Development Transformation and Integration at IBM; Niel Nickolaisen, CIO and Director of Strategic Planning at Headwaters, Inc.; Steve Greene, Director of Tools & Process at Salesforce.com; Melanie Bristol, Director of IT Quality Assurance, Quest Diagnostics; and others- who have led in an agile manner and applied it in tough times. Hear what worked for them and in their organizations and where they failed- sometimes miserably.

The Agile Leadership Summit is the perfect opportunity to meet and network with your peers and learn proven ways to improve value delivery by evolving people and practices based on agile software principles.

Please see more details and register at:
<http://sqe.com/BetterSoftwareConf/APLN/Default.aspx>

Are you a Superperformer?



We want to gratefully thank **Dave Guerra** for his enlightening talk on servant leadership and its link to superperforming organizations. Dave's presentation is now available in the Speakers Presentations section of our website www.APLNHouston.org.

We also want to thank Dave for his double-duty as speaker for the PMI Houston Chapter

meeting that same evening as well. Look for this presentation on www.pmihouston.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

We are looking for a few good volunteers!

- ❖ Newsletter Editor and Contributors
 - Articles on real-world agile experiences
 - Book reviews
 - Blog references
- ❖ Event coordinators
 - Program coordination
 - Speaker recruitment
 - Event announcements
- ❖ Webmaster
 - Content management

If these sound interesting or if you have other talents you want to share come help APLNH grow. Contact a member of the leadership team today.

The Discussion is Growing – Are You a Part?

Agility is about participation. Be sure your voice is heard.



Search the LinkedIn group directory for **APLN Houston**.

Three Pounds of Manure in a Two-Pound Sack

Is this how *you* feel about multi-tasking?

Read as **Payson Hall** eavesdrops on a coaching session between two managers about how to assign and prioritize work effectively.

<http://www.stickyminds.com/sitewide.asp?Function=edetail&ObjectType=ART&ObjectId=14849>

A www.stickyminds.com original.



Agile in a Downturn

The current economic downturn is a new test for Agile, until now Agile has been promoted in a growing economy. Proponents of Agile have emphasized how it improves competitive advantage and helps a company out-compete its rivals.

Now companies are concerned with simple survival. Today's managers are concerned with cutting costs, improving cash flow and managing without credit. Organizational change and process improvement are not top of the agenda. Promoting Agile in this environment is something new.

The first question we need to ask is: *How, if at all, can Agile help companies manage in the downturn?*

Read more from the **Agile Journal**:
<http://agilejournal.com/articles/columns/articles/1464-agile-in-the-downturn>

APLN Houston Can Come to You

Do you wish more of your colleagues could participate in APLN Houston? Wish your organization know more about agility?

Not to worry, APLN Houston can come to you.

As result of feedback from our January 2009 Futurespective Workshop, APLN Houston is starting a **Community Speaker Program**. We are assembling a series of presentations on introductory agile topics and can come speak to your group or organization. Let us know what you would like to hear from us. Also let us know if you would like to become an APLNH Speaker.

Book-of-the-Month

Artful Making – Rob Austin & Lee Devin

“A theatre company consistently delivers a valuable, innovative product under the pressure of a very firm deadline (opening night). That product, a play, executes with great precision, incorporating significant innovations every time, but finishing within 30 seconds of the same length every time.”

Wish your project teams could do this?

That this book is the collaboration of two professors is not so odd, but waitō Rob Austin is a professor of business administration at Harvard Business School; Lee Devin is a professor of theatre. What could they possibly have in common? Their conclusion:

“Like it or not, artists have something useful to say to business people. Let’s get use to that. And use it.”

This book is not about agility, not about software development, not about project management. So why recommend it? How a theater director guides an ensemble of actors in making a play is a remarkably potent model for leading knowledge workers. Carefully tracing the evolution of leadership through the eras of *ancient making* and *industrial making*, Austin and Devin make their case that *artful making* drives the forces of convergence and emergence to reliably create innovation.

Artful Making provides a profound model for agile leadership. Read it today, regardless of your role, it will make you a better leader.

-Robbie Mac Iver

1

The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.

-- John Foster Dulles

1



Please join us in thanking PMI Houston for their generous support!

APLN Houston Leadership Team

Robbie Mac Iver: rmaciver@swdecisions.com
Ron Whitebread: Whitebread.Ron@corp.sysco.com
Alan Bustamante: alan_bustamante@yahoo.com
Shravan Arra: shravanarra@yahoo.com