

Everything is better when we stick together

Building team working agreements with LEGO Serious Play

Why Team Working Agreements?:

- Teams establish a shared understanding of how they will be together
- Team members become more aware of their own individual behaviour.
- Agreement helps facilitators and team members to hold each other accountable to the agreements made.
- Enhances group process – creates clarity, transparency, respect.

Plan to bring with you:

- Sticky notes and sharpies.
- LEGO kits (see below)
- A timer (possibly music as a timer)

General notes

- After the very first exercise, builds will always be either 3 or 4 minutes. Pick a time and stick with it. We don't time the story telling but do encourage people to move quickly.

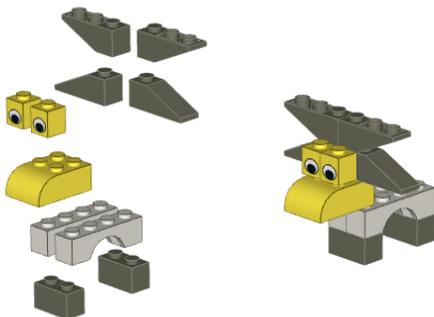
PART 1 : SKILL BUILDING

1a) Build a bridge (2 min build):

- Build a bridge from LEGO bricks. *The point here is just to get people comfortable with the LEGO bricks. Many have not used LEGO since they were kids, if ever, and need a chance to familiarize themselves.*
- Show your bridge to your neighbours and tell them what's interesting about it.

1b) Build from instructions (3 min build):

- Build a moose from the instructions at www.gargoylesoftware.com/lsp/moose
- Show your neighbours. All the moose should be identical. *If they aren't, discuss.*



1c) Build to share a story (3 min build):

- Building on your moose from the previous step, build something abstract that describes the best or worst team member ever.
- Each person now shares the story of their model with the others at their table. *Encourage them to keep it brief.*

PART 2 : RETROSPECTIVE BUILDS

We will repeat this cycle three or four times with different questions to elicit a complete picture of the retro subject.

2a) Facilitator asks an open-ended question, such as:

- What's the superpower you bring to this team?
- What kind of help do I want from my team to be high-performing?
- What colour signifies conflict to you? Why?
- What should we do if one of us is letting the team down?

2b) Participants build (3 minutes)

- In silence, participants build a model that represents their answer to the question.
- *Ask them to not check their phones or talk to their neighbours. This will interrupt the flow we're trying to achieve.*

2c) Participants share their stories

- Everyone gets a chance to tell their story
- Talk specifically about what's in the model.
- Only talk about things that are in the model.
- Others may ask clarifying questions, but only about things that are in the model. *It's ok to say "Does the red brick on top mean something?" but not ok to say "I had a similar experience...."*

2d) Capture the stories on a sticky note

- Each person writes a few words on a sticky note to capture the essence of their story when they finish sharing it with the group. In the interest of time, you may want to have this done as we're telling stories.

2e) Repeat

- Repeat part 2 as often as needed to capture answers for a variety of questions. We'll typically do three or four questions before moving on to part 3.

PART 3 : Decide what action to take

- At this point, we should have one sticky note per question per person on the table.
- Give everyone a moment to review the stickies currently on the table. Cluster if it makes sense.
- Dot-vote to determine where the team will focus their attention in the next sprint / block of time
- Pick the top 1-3 items and determine what specific actions the team will take to improve on those

PART 4 : Done

- Ask everyone to separate all the LEGO bricks and put them back in the bags. This will make your life easier when you reorganize the bags.

PART 5 : Care and Feeding of Your Working Agreement

- As the team changes over time, the team will want to review and update their working agreements. When team members join or leave can be a good time to revisit existing agreements. Even with a team that hasn't changed, it's worth reviewing them periodically to see if they still make sense and if the team wants to incorporate new behaviours to focus on..

Getting the kits from LEGO

Official LEGO SERIOUS PLAY kits can be purchased from www.lego.com.

Part 2000409: Window Exploration Bag

Part 2000414: Starter Kit

Build your own:

You'll want 50-60 pieces per person with certain specific pieces.

- A mini-fig
- Something that moves (wheels, propeller etc)
- Something transparent
- Some plates and bricks

Each kit should be identical so everyone is working with the same pieces

Suggested books

BUILDING A BETTER BUSINESS USING THE LEGO SERIOUS PLAY METHOD...

by Per Kristiansen, Robert Rasmussen

Strategic Play: The Creative Facilitator's Guide

by Jacquie Lloyd Smith & Denise Meyerson

Serious Work: How to Facilitate Meetings and Workshops Using the LEGO SERIOUS PLAY Method

by Sean Blair & Marko Rillo

Your facilitators



Ellen Grove is an Agile coach & trainer with Agile Partnership based in Ottawa, Canada. Ellen helps teams and organizations do better work through coaching them in creating the circumstances in which they can work effectively while having fun. Ellen is a StrategicPlay certified facilitator in Lego Serious Play methods, a Training from the Back of the Room trainer, an Open Space facilitator, and a serial organizer of Agile events, most recently Agile Coach Camp Canada, Business Agility Conference and Play4Agile North America

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Mike Bowler is an Agile and technical coach and trainer. He blends his strong technical background with a deep understanding of Agile methods to help teams consistently improve how they deliver value to their customers.

Recognizing that all software is written and maintained by people, Mike also has a keen interest in the neuroscience of how people work, both individually and in teams. He is a trained LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® facilitator and is one of the organizers of Play4Agile North America

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